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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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**Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan:
Irish Patriote**

Robert Charles Daley

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
History**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada**

December 1986

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ABSTRACT

Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan: Irish Patriote

Robert Charles Daley, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 1987

Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, born in Ireland in 1797, emigrated to Canada in 1823. Ten years later he became the editor of the Vindicator, an English language reform newspaper published in Montreal. Elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1834, he became Louis-Joseph Papineau's principal English-speaking lieutenant, and did his best to maintain Irish Catholic support for the cause of reform and the parti patriote. In November 1837 the offices of his newspaper were ransacked by a Tory crowd, and he and Papineau left Montreal to avoid arrest. With the failure of the consequent insurrection, O'Callaghan, Papineau and the patriotes went into exile in the United States.

Once south of the border, O'Callaghan maintained his ties with other exiles and his interest in Canadian affairs. Although he eventually established himself in a new career as the state archivist of New York, his correspondence with such associates as Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie provides us with a running commentary on people and events in Canada throughout the 1840's. After mid-century O'Callaghan's involvement with Canada gradually subsided, but he remained a liberal observer of its politics until his death in 1880.

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PREFACE

This dissertation is a study of Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan and the politics of Lower Canada during the period before, during and after the Rebellion of 1837. It is organized around O'Callaghan's biography, but it concentrates on his participation in and commentary upon the politics of the province, and his involvement with the Irish Catholic communities of Montreal and Quebec City.

O'Callaghan, who emigrated from Ireland to Lower Canada in 1823, was appointed ten years later the editor of the Vindicator, the province's English language patriote newspaper which sought to attract Irish readers in particular.¹ Elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1834, he became the principal English-speaking lieutenant of Louis-Joseph Papineau and fled with him to the United States after the abortive uprising of 1837.

Both O'Callaghan and Papineau believed that, like the Irish Rebellion of 1798, the Lower Canadian rising had been the result of a British plot to undermine the rights of the people and impose upon them an unfavorable constitutional arrangement. This dissertation will examine both that contention, and the general lines of comparison which can be drawn between the history of Ireland during the 1790's and that of Lower Canada during the 1830's. It will also examine the efforts of O'Callaghan to maintain an alliance between Irish and French-Canadian

¹ The term patriote refers to the program of radical reform and opposition to the "bureaucratic" rule of British governors and their supporters during the 1830's.

reformers which had been established by Jocelyn Waller and Daniel Tracey. And it will analyse the reasons that Irish participation in the uprising of 1837 was so limited despite O'Callaghan's rôle within the patriote movement.

In the United States O'Callaghan eventually established himself as the state archivist of New York. Yet he maintained his interest in Canadian affairs, and his contacts with Canadian correspondents, notably Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie. The last four chapters will examine his attempts to continue the movement and his reflections on people and events in his first adopted country--to which he was occasionally tempted to return.

My interest in the history of Ireland and Irishmen undoubtedly stemmed originally from my own ethnic origins, and from the pride in being Irish which was instilled in me by my father, Mr. Donald Daley, long a teacher and principal with the Montreal Catholic School Commission. I first embarked on its study under the supervision of Professor Howard Weinroth at McGill University, and wrote my M.A. thesis at Concordia University on the United Irish, the Defenders and the Rebellion of 1798 under Professor George Rudé.² After deciding to pursue my Ph.D. in Canadian History, I was introduced to O'Callaghan's place in Lower Canadian affairs during a seminar at Concordia conducted by my advisor Professor Robin Burns, who had done his major research on another Irish emigrant, D'Arcy McGee, and who assured me that there was room for further research on this relatively neglected man.³

² Robert Charles Daley, "United Irish, Defenders and the Rebellion of 1798" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1974).

³ Robin Burns, "D'Arcy McGee: A Biography" (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1976), and "D'Arcy McGee and the New Nationality" (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1966).

Nothing comprehensive, in fact, has been written to date about Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan. The only major work has been Francis Shaw Guy's treatment of his career as state archivist of New York, and as such it is complementary to the present study.⁴ Maureen Slattery Durley has completed an interesting but brief examination of O'Callaghan's early years in Canada at the Montreal General Hospital.⁵ And Professor Jacques Monet has provided a well-balanced contribution to the Dictionary of Canadian Biography.⁶ Apart from these there are only a few old and largely unreliable articles in various journals.

The Irish community of Lower Canada has been examined in a number of books and dissertations, but these have focused mainly on the period after the Irish Famine. Only William Nolte's work devotes itself in any depth to the years between 1815 and 1845, and it is to be hoped that some historian will soon devote his energy to a full-scale social study of the Irish community of the province during that period.⁷ However, two recent M.A. theses produced at Concordia have made a contribution to the political history of the Irish community, and these works by Mary Finnegan and Patricia Peter have been most helpful.⁸

⁴ Francis Shaw Guy, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan: A Study in American Historiography (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1934; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1974).

⁵ Maureen Slattery Durley, "Dr. Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, His Early Years in Medicine, Montreal, 1823-1828," CCHA Report, 1980.

⁶ Jacques Monet, "Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan," Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

⁷ William M. Nolte, "The Irish in Canada, 1815-1867" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1975).

⁸ Mary Finnegan, "The Irish-French Alliance in Lower Canada, 1822-1835" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1982); Patricia Brown Peter, "A Question of Loyalty and Self-Interest: Irish Montrealers and the Struggle for Responsible Government in Canada, 1840 to 1848" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1981).

The sources available for a study of Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan included his voluminous correspondence, which is preserved mainly in the twenty volumes of O'Callaghan Papers at the Library of Congress in Washington; the O'Callaghan, Papineau, Chapman and Perrault Papers at the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa; and the Mackenzie Correspondence located at the Archives of Ontario in Toronto. Unfortunately, the involvement of O'Callaghan and many of his correspondents in the events of 1837, and the warrants issued for their arrest, led them to destroy many or all of their letters--at least those they could get their hands on. Thus O'Callaghan burned much of his correspondence, as did Mrs. Mackenzie for her husband, William Lyon Mackenzie.⁹ And the absence of letters which pre-date 1838 in the manuscript collections of O'Callaghan, Mackenzie and other patriotes such as L.-J. Papineau, makes it clear that the precautions they took were largely successful. These letters would have been invaluable to this study, and their absence has been very frustrating. For letters dated after December 1837, no such problem exists, and the last four chapters are based largely on this correspondence.

⁹ Thus O'Callaghan wrote to Louis-Joseph Papineau in 1838, in relation to charges made against him by Bidwell: "Previous to my leaving Montreal I destroyed all the letters which I had ever received from Mr. B. fearing that, were my lodgings searched, I should have exposed Mr. B. to some trouble were letters from him found in my possession." O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 May 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2927. It is clear that all the political correspondence in O'Callaghan's possession before he fled Montreal met the same fate as that of Bidwell. The letters in the possession of W.L. Mackenzie, one of O'Callaghan's chief correspondents later, were burned by Mrs. Mackenzie on his instructions: see note in Mackenzie's handwriting of 4 December 1837, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, Archives of Ontario, MS 516. The O'Callaghan papers at the Public Archives of Canada and those at the Library of Congress contain virtually no letters which pre-date 1838. The Papineau Papers at the Public Archives of Canada are also largely bereft of correspondence before 1838.

For the earlier chapters, then, although some letters do exist, it was necessary to turn to other sources, by far the most important of which was the Vindicator, which O'Callaghan edited from 1833 until its closure in November 1837. Here it was possible to discover O'Callaghan's political philosophy and also often to trace his activities within the Irish community and the patriote movement. Also helpful were other newspapers of the time, especially La Minerve and Le Canadien. The Journals of the Legislative Assembly were invaluable for an understanding of O'Callaghan's career there, and the Sessional Papers of the British House of Commons made it possible to examine British manoeuvring before and after the rebellion. Finally the reports of the emigration agent, A.C. Buchanan, and the records of the Roman Catholic Church have provided insights into the Irish Catholic community.

It is my hope that this dissertation will shed light on a man whose importance to Canadian history has often been underestimated. Recently arrived from Ireland, by 1837 he was undoubtedly one of the most influential patriote leaders, and a man very much distrusted and disliked by the British authorities and the Tories. Exiled, he would never return; yet his letters shed a relatively detached light on political events in Canada over the next decade. While he is recognized in the United States as a major figure in nineteenth century research on the colonial period, and Guy's study does him justice in this regard, it is remarkable that no previous work has attempted to analyse his rôle as the leading Irish patriote in Lower Canada at the time of the Rebellion of 1837.

I have had much kind assistance in the preparation of this thesis, and I wish to express my gratitude to my advisor, Professor

Robin Burns, formerly of Concordia University and presently of Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Quebec for his direction, his incisive comments and his good humour; to my M.A. advisor, Professor George Rudé of Concordia, who kindly read an earlier draft and who, with his wife the Irish Doreen, was always supportive; to the very helpful staffs at the Public Archives of Canada in Ottawa (especially Mr. Ron Kuhnle and Mr. David Walden of the Pre-Confederation Manuscript Division), the Library of Congress in Washington (especially Paul T. Heffron), the Archives of Ontario at Toronto (especially Mr. Allan J. Macdonald, who has prepared a masterful inventory of the Mackenzie Correspondence, and Mrs. M. Corcoran), and the Archives nationales du Québec at Montreal and Quebec City; to Ms. Monique Montbriand of the Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Montreal; to Father Bruno Harel of the Archives of St. Sulpice at Montreal; and to the staffs of the Norris and Vanier Libraries at Concordia University, the McLennan Library at McGill University, the Montreal Library, and the Social Sciences Library at the Université de Montréal.

I wish also to thank Wendy Lindsay, who typed the final draft with such efficiency; my mother, Mrs. Geraldine Rumfeldt of Oakville, Ontario, who typed an earlier draft and who was always confident of my ability to complete this project, even when I was not; and finally, last but far from least, my wife, Linda McDonald, who typed drafts, read proofs, suggested alterations in style, and helped see me through the process in so many ways.

CHAPTER I

IRISH BIRTHRIGHT

1797-1823

It was Castlereagh and the Irish Union over again. Goad the people into violence and when they fall victims to the snares, abolish their constitutional rights. Read the history of Ireland and its legislative union with England, and you will see, as in a mirror, the plot of 1836-37 against Canadian liberty.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1852¹

These words, penned by Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan many years after he had left Canada, indicate the sense of futility and bitterness with which he viewed a fate so inexorable and a foe so intractable that they pursued him across an ocean, casting him and his friends into a re-enactment of those events which had clouded his early childhood. For the Irish boy born on 27 February 1797, scarcely more than a year before the outbreak of the bloody rebellion there and its sanguinary suppression, would become a man for whom the overthrow of British tyranny was the central purpose in life, one which, if he could not pursue it in his native land, he would dedicate himself to in another.² But in the end

¹ O'Callaghan to F.-X. Garneau, 17 July 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), MG24-B50, vol. 2.

² Francis Shaw Guy, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan: A Study in American Historiography, The Catholic University of America Studies in American Church History, vol. 18 (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1934; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1974), p. 1, argues for 28 February 1797, but Jacques Monet "Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 554, and The Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), p. 624 (hereafter MDCB), both give 27 February. Who was Who in America, 1607-1896 (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1963), p. 384 agree with Guy.

he would find that he could do no better than escape from a power that he had so dearly hoped to help overthrow.

An understanding of the legacy of Irish history is essential to the comprehension of O'Callaghan's career. This chapter, therefore, will examine the Ireland of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the land which O'Callaghan left, but whose history and reality would never cease to haunt him. The events and circumstances of the 1830's in Lower Canada would, moreover, bear an eerie resemblance to those of the 1790's in Ireland, and would leave O'Callaghan once again homeless and plagued by the strength of British imperialism. After an examination of the events and social conditions which led to the Rebellion of 1798, the chapter will examine the condition of Ireland after the Union of 1801, which in many ways foreshadowed the Canadian Union of 1841. The plight of the country would lead increasingly large numbers to emigrate from Ireland, among them O'Callaghan in 1823, and the chapter will conclude with an examination of the process that took them from the old to the new world, and in particular to Lower Canada.

The Rebellion of 1798 in Ireland had been both a series of local uprisings and part of the international revolutionary upsurge which had already chased the British from their American colonies and the Bourbons from the throne of France. But in Ireland the government had been better prepared and the insurrectionary forces divided. As a result, reaction had swept all before it, and in 1801 Britain had imposed a parliamentary union on a people who were then without the resources to resist. But the new century did not put an end to the murmurings of the oppressed in Ireland nor elsewhere in Europe, and the ideas of liberty and equality would continue to take root in the minds of the intellectuals and the oppressed, spreading even to such remote spheres as the

shores of the St. Lawrence. There men would gradually begin to question their rule by a foreign government, and to resent the injustices to which they were daily subjected by venal placeholders and greedy land company officials.

O'Callaghan, then, would find in Lower Canada many conditions reminiscent of his homeland. Both were lands deeply divided along ethnic, class and religious lines. Both were dependent politically and economically on England, and both were ruled by administrations appointed by the British government. Both had large Catholic majorities who, at least when conquered, spoke a language other than English. And while Ireland had its Protestant "Ascendancy" of Anglo-Irish landlords, and its "plantation" of Scottish Presbyterians in Ulster,³ Lower Canada had its own English-speaking and largely Protestant elites and commoners. In both cases, the alien elites were largely indebted for their possessions to a redistribution of land consequent upon conquest, and in both the "official" religion had become not that of the masses, but that of England.

Irishmen had begun emigrating in large numbers to America towards the end of the eighteenth century. Strife, poverty and lack of opportunity led them to seek a better way of life across the sea. For many, of course, the dream was illusory or even fatal. But it was a dream not only of prosperity, but of liberty as well. It is, therefore, not surprising that someone as young and idealistic as Edmund Bailey

³ The invasions of James I and Cromwell had resulted in the seizure of more than 70 percent of the land in seven, and between 40 and 70 percent in another sixteen, of the thirty-two counties: Karl S. Bottigheimer, English Money and Irish Land (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1791), pp. 214-15.

O'Callaghan would set out in 1823 to find in a new world a better future. What is perhaps unusual is that he would originally seek it not in the United States, but in Lower Canada, a colony ruled by the same oppressive power as Ireland.

The social and economic situation of the Ireland into which O'Callaghan had been born must also have helped decide him to leave its shores. About 10 percent of the Irish population was Anglican (Church of Ireland), and owned 85 percent of the land; 20 percent was Presbyterian and lived mainly in the north; and the remainder was Catholic.⁴ The last group, however, could not legally own land, carry arms or even vote. In fact, a priest who celebrated mass was subject to transportation, though this law was never applied.⁵ Most of the people were engaged in agriculture (especially since Britain had destroyed the Irish woolen industry late in the previous century because of its competition with the English manufacture), but the majority of the great landowners, both lay and ecclesiastic, were absentees who rarely visited their estates.⁶ Few of these landlords bothered to improve their land, nor did they establish any contact with their tenants. Social stratification was so rigid that in many cases the peasant never even saw his

⁴ William James MacNeven, Pieces of Irish History (New York: Bernard Dornin, 1807), pp. 8-9.

⁵ Arthur Young, A Tour in Ireland ed. A.W. Hutton, 2 vols. (London: n.p., 1780; reprint ed., London: n.p., 1892), 2: 60-61.

⁶ Twenty years before O'Callaghan's birth, Arthur Young estimated the value of the rentals of lay absentees at over £700,000: *ibid.*, 2: 114-16. An estimate of 1773, however, placed it at half that amount: see Edith M. Johnston, Great Britain and Ireland 1760-1800 (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), pp. 404-5.

lord, but only his agent or proctor.⁷

K.H. Connell, a researcher in Irish population, estimates that the number of inhabitants of Ireland rose from about 3,000,000 in 1725 to about 3,500,000 in 1770 and to 4,500,000 by 1790.⁸ He attributes this rise to the possibility of earlier marriage occasioned by the ability of a man to support a family upon a limited amount of land due to the prevalence and character of the potato. One acre planted with that crop could support at least six, and possibly eight, people for a year, while at least two acres of wheat would be required to support the same number.⁹ The introduction of new fertilizers had increased the yield, and especially after the return to a preponderance of arable farming outside of Ulster after 1780 the potato would cause a rapid

⁷ All through Ireland the lot of the poor was made worse by the intrusion of middle-men who leased large tracts of land and then relet small plots at a profit. Despite the doubts of Peter Gibbon, there can be no doubt that this system remained prevalent, as contemporary evidence leaves little room for doubt. In fact, it may well have become more common late in the century. Moreover, the land was often sublet not only once, but passed down in ever smaller slices. But it was the speculative middle-man who made the large profit. These men rarely improved the land, but were, in the words of Young, "bloodsuckers": See Peter Gibbon, "The origins of the Orange Order and the United Irishmen," *Economy and Society*, vol. 1 (1972), pp. 138-39; K.H. Connell, *The Population of Ireland 1750-1845* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), pp. 66-69; W.E.H. Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Longman, Green, 1892; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1969), 2: 3-11; 3: 393-413; Young, 1: 275, 285, 296, 426; 2: 24-30.

⁸ Connell, p. 25. See also p. 1.

⁹ Young, 2: 46 estimates eight people per acre; Connell, p. 123 states six.

increase in the Irish population.¹⁰

The increase in population, as well as a general inflationary spiral, caused rents to rise dramatically.¹¹ At the same time, the peasant was also shackled with the payment of tithes to the established church, of which he was not usually a member.¹² These dues were, moreover, rarely collected by the clergy, but were farmed out to proctors who went about collecting them in any way they could, and naturally at a profit.¹³ The poor peasant was also saddled with the county cess (obligatory labor on public roads) and usually had to work for his landlord at a set price, conditions similar to the remaining seigneurial duties of the censitaire in Lower Canada.

¹⁰ Connell, pp. 90, 136. See also pp. 52, 99, 121-123, 242-244. The figures establishing the sudden change from pasture to arable are remarkable. Exports of wheat rose from 13,358 barrels in 1772-1779 to 65,704 in 1780-1789; of oats from 95,887 barrels to 210,964 during the same period; of barley from 22,116 barrels to 76,425; of oatmeal from 51,407 cwt. to 71,833; and of flour from 11,746 cwt. to 49,890. The value of all corn exports rose from £65,000 in 1772-1779 to £252,000 in 1780-1789: Connell, p. 268. Meanwhile, exports of beef dropped from 187,756 barrels in 1780 to 136,651 in 1785, to 126,994 in 1790, and to 124,607 in 1795; exports of pork fell from 96,554 barrels in 1780 to 58,446 in 1785, but they did rise again to 100,266 in 1790 and to 129,922 in 1795: L.M. Cullen, Anglo Irish Trade, 1660-1800 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968), p. 70.

¹¹ David Large, "The wealth of the greater Irish landowners, 1750-1815," Irish Historical Studies, 15 (1966): 28-29 and the Appendix. See also Connell, p. 69: rents may well have quadrupled between 1760 and 1815. The inflation was general also in the price of commodities: a sheep costing 4s.-14s. in 1748 sold for 12s.-40s. by 1792; a fat ox worth £4-£6 had risen to £8-£16, while a milch cow had quadrupled in value and a stone of wool had risen from 6s.-8s. to 16s.-17s: Young, 2: 343.

¹² The tithes were heavily weighted in favor of the great graziers and against the poor subsistence-level cottars: Young, 2: 109-110.

¹³ Lecky, 2: 14-17.

The peasant in the north generally had no more than one or two acres of land on which he planted potatoes and flax, and spent most of his time weaving the flax of large landowners. But there were day laborers who were even poorer: "In weaving it is common for one man to have several looms, at which journeymen weavers work, who are paid their lodging and board, and one third of what they earn, which may come to 2s. a week on an average."¹⁴ In the south, on the other hand, the area with which O'Callaghan was best acquainted, it was common for the peasant to be in charge of twenty to forty cattle for his landlord, in return for which he received a cabin, a potato garden, some livestock and other benefits.¹⁵ In the central regions the peasant was usually dependent almost entirely upon his acre of potatoes and some livestock.¹⁶ When Arthur Young asked one poor man whose surplus was only 20s., how he could afford these extras, he replied that "he must eat his geese and pig, or else not dress so well."¹⁷ Rents were rising steadily, and wages were simply not keeping pace.¹⁸ The lot of the poor could scarcely get worse, and the injunction of Young was not remembered: "Kings ought not to forget that the splendour of majesty is

¹⁴ Young, 1: 134.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1: 365-377.

¹⁶ For example, the average labourer on one estate in County Clare lived in a cabin with five other people, had one acre of potatoes and 2½ acres of corn, three cows, 1½ horses and 9½ sheep: Young, 1: 290. And the accounts of four cottars show that, after expenses, they had between £1 and £4 to pay for such "luxuries" as whiskey and the services of a priest: Ibid., 1: 429, 436, 444-5, 456.

¹⁷ Ibid., 1: 455 (Young's italics).

¹⁸ Ibid., 2: 50-51.

derived from the sweat of industrious, and too often oppressed peasants."¹⁹ But it was a fact which quite evidently imprinted itself upon the impressionable mind of the young O'Callaghan.

The Irish peasantry, however, was not prepared to lie low forever. As their lot became worse, especially due to some sudden mishap, their anger rose to fever pitch, as would that of many French-Canadian habitants in 1837. The first blows were struck as early as the 1760's.²⁰ In the counties of Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford and Cork, the "Whiteboys" congregated in large, disciplined parties, tore down fences and houghed cattle (cut their hamstrings). The movement spread across the south, and turned its attention also to tithes--from which the great cattle graziers were exempt!²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., 1: 2.

²⁰ Lecky, 2: 1-8. In the previous decade, disease had struck the cattle of Germany, Holland and Britain, pushing up the price of beef. This led many landlords, especially in the south, to turn from arable farming to pasturage, opening common fields to herds of cattle and discontinuing leases which had expired. This naturally drove many starving peasants from their homes.

²¹ Ibid., 2: 11-17. Lord Charlemont commented: "The real causes were not difficult to be ascertained. Exorbitant rents, low wages, want of employment in a country destitute of manufacture, where desolation and famine were the effects of fertility....Farms of enormous extent let by their rapacious and indolent proprietors to monopolizing land-jobbers, by whom small portions of them were again let and relet to intermediate oppressors, and by them sub-divided for five times their value among the wretched starvers upon potatoes and water. Taxes yearly increasing, and, still more, tithes, which the Catholic, without any possible benefit, unwillingly pays in addition to his priest's money, and by whose oppressive assessment the despairing cultivator, instead of being rewarded for his industry, is taxed in proportion as he is industrious. Misery, oppression, and famine, these were undoubtedly the first and original causes.": James, First Earl of Charlemont, The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont, (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1891), 1:21. See also Hereward Senior, Orangeism in Ireland and Britain, 1795-1836 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966; Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966), pp. 4-5.

But agrarian unrest was by no means restricted to that area. The north would be the scene of unrest in 1763, when the "Oakboys," mainly Protestants and Dissenters, would protest the raising of tithes, and again in 1771, when the "Steelboys" arose in response to the rapacious rent increases imposed by the Marquis of Donegal.²² Many of those affected would eventually emigrate to America, as would O'Callaghan fifty years later. The south, meanwhile, was beset by periodic outbreaks of Whiteboy violence. Between 1775 and 1785 it spread widely through the south. Always the main grievances were the raising of rents or the opening of bids on land when a lease had expired, and tithes, although the main emphasis varied. The movement became more violent as the years passed, and attacks on individuals, including Protestant clergymen, increased. But the Whiteboys had no political policies, and one of their proclamations, issued in Cork in 1787, stressed their loyalty to the King and the government and that they did not want to rob the landlord, only to restrict him to his traditional rights.²³

²² Charlemont, 2: 137-142; Lecky, 2: 46-51; Senior, pp. 4-5. Only a few leaders were apprehended: one in Armagh had an estate of £100 a year.

²³ Lecky, 2: 20-29; Young, 1: 64, 92, who commented: "The disturbances of the Whiteboys, which lasted ten years, in spite of every exertion of legal power, were in many circumstances very remarkable; and in none more so than the surprising intelligence among the insurgents where ever found: it was universal, and almost instantaneous: the numerous bodies of them, at whatever distance from each other, seemed animated with one soul; and not an instance was known in that long course of time of a single individual betraying the cause; the severest threats, and the most splendid promises of reward, had no other effect but to draw closer the bands which connected a multitude, to all appearance so desultory. It was then evident that the iron rod of oppression had been far enough from securing the obedience, or crushing the spirit of the people."

Sitting atop this volcanic heap was a small ruling class alien in religion and culture. The landed, Protestant Ascendancy, whose roots lay in Britain, was not only socially, but also politically, dominant and controlled Irish government. However, being such a small minority, it had to rely on British support to impose its will, just as the latter needed it to keep control of the island. While the Ascendancy did occasionally attempt to gain support for its policies within the country, it more frequently tried to divide the opposition along religious or class lines. It was, in essence, a colony of Britain which in its turn colonized the Irish.²⁴ O'Callaghan would find in Lower Canada very similar groups of rulers and ruled.

Between the masses and the masters lay the middle classes, commercial and professional. Since the Protestant landlords rarely got involved in business, the Irish middle classes developed primarily among the Presbyterian and other Dissenting groups, especially the Quakers.²⁵ However, despite Cullen's doubts, Maureen Wall seems to establish that a thriving community of middle-class Catholics did develop during the century, taking advantage of their other disabilities to concentrate on trade and avoid extravagance.²⁶ The Catholics benefitted from connections with merchants in Europe, as the Dissenters did with merchants in

²⁴ Johnston, pp. 2-3.

²⁵ Cullen, pp. 23, 93 and p. 232.

²⁶ Maureen Wall, "The rise of a Catholic middle class in eighteenth-century Ireland," Irish Historical Studies, vol. 2 (September 1958), pp. 102-3. For Cullen's partial disagreement, see Cullen, p. 23.

Britain and America, who shared their religion.²⁷ Thus the emerging middle classes, of which O'Callaghan was himself a member, had connections in Europe and America, but were almost all without links with the Ascendancy, and were therefore sympathetic to criticism of the corrupt system of government, annoyed by the periodic restrictions on Irish trade imposed by British policy, and suited to lead a movement for reform, or--should the right circumstances arise--even revolution.²⁸ The government therefore feared that the mass of the people would indeed find the leadership they lacked in the shops and offices of Dublin, Belfast and Cork. O'Callaghan, had he been older, would undoubtedly have played just such a rôle, but in the event he would take the stage in another place and at another time.

The reasons for British interest in Ireland were many, but a good summary was given by T.C. Grenville in 1784: "Ireland is too great to be unconnected with us, and too near us to be dependent on a foreign state, and too little to be independent."²⁹ Thus the maintenance of British rule in Ireland was a fundamental tenet of the Imperial government: moreover, since it saw the existence of the Ascendancy as essential to that end, its continuation was also necessary. Therefore, the British government would go to almost any length to support its adherents--and to protect them: as the Irish nationalist historian Patrick O'Farrell

²⁷ Wall, pp. 112-4. Also Cullen, pp. 92-3. The richest merchant in the last decade of the century, Edward Byrne, was a Catholic: Wall, pp. 2-3.

²⁸ See Güy, p. 4.

²⁹ T.C. Grenville to the Duke of Rutland, 1784, quoted in Johnston, p. 1.

has written, to Britain the Protestant Ascendancy was Ireland.³⁰ As for the national and social yearnings of the rest of the people, they were, and would always remain, incomprehensible or abhorrent. Of this the agile mind of O'Callaghan undoubtedly became aware at an early age, and he could not later but notice the British reliance on a similar group in Lower Canada.

The war with the American colonies and France led in Ireland to the development of the Irish volunteers, dedicated to the protection of Ireland from invasion. The Ascendancy, however, spearheaded by its Whig elements, used the force to achieve the technical independence of the Irish Parliament from Britain. Although this move strengthened the position of the Protestant aristocracy, it changed little in the relationship between Ireland and England. However, since it removed all restrictions on Irish commerce imposed by the imperial government, it was supported and welcomed by the middle classes, especially those involved in foreign trade. O'Callaghan undoubtedly looked back on it as progressive. To the mass of the people, however, increased powers for the Irish Parliament meant only, as the historian Thomas Pakenham so eloquently states, "new power to persecute them," for the aims even of the more liberal members of the Ascendancy "had little more to do with the mass of the Irish people than George Washington's with the Red Indians."³¹

³⁰ Patrick O'Farrell, Ireland's English Question (London: B.T. Batsford, 1971) p. 53.

³¹ Thomas Pakenham, The Year of Liberty (London: Hadden and Stoughton, 1969; reprint ed., London: Panther Books, 1972), p. 31.

On the issues of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation the Ascendancy showed its true colours. In 1782, a bill was passed by the Irish Parliament which gave the Catholics a great measure of social equality before the law. In their own country they could now own property, freely exercise their religion, be educated, marry, and carry arms.³² It was this law which made it possible for O'Callaghan's brother to join the army. But the Ascendancy would not grant Catholics political equality, nor even allow for a wider franchise under some scheme of Parliamentary Reform, lest they lose control of the Parliament; and the British, equally anxious that the Irish legislature be amenable, decided to support them.³³ This refusal to grant any further concessions to the Catholics was reinforced in the mind of William Pitt, then British prime minister, when Henry Grattan, the Irish parliamentary leader, rejected his proposal for closer commercial and political ties between the two countries.³⁴ The Ascendancy, having obtained its demands by 1782, for the most part desired no further change. The few who wished to go further, like Grattan, were in a minority; moreover, they soon found themselves in conflict with those who were not at all sympathetic to the British connection--in any form.

Since Catholics could now bear arms, they could also join the Volunteers, and that body became increasingly split between moderates and radicals. Agreement was general that some form of Parliamentary

³² Thomas MacNevin, The History of the Volunteers of 1782 (Dublin: James Duffy, 1845), pp. 163-4.

³³ Johnston, pp. 203-4.

³⁴ Richard Koebner, Empire (London: Cambridge University Press, 1961; reprint ed., New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1965), p. 266.

Reform was needed, but much dissent arose over the question of further concessions to the Catholics. Finally a majority pushed through resolutions for reform which ignored the issue entirely, and these the House of Commons felt little hesitation in rejecting, since they had lost the support of the Catholics.³⁵ This broke the power of the movement, and it was increasingly abandoned by the wealthy and respectable. Grattan would later comment: "the original Volunteers... represented the property of the nation, but attempts had been made to arm the poverty of the kingdom."³⁶ The Ascendancy had triumphed in 1782, not the Irish people. And the Catholic middle classes, who had backed the Volunteer movement and the demand for emancipation, chose to stand down lest they be overwhelmed by those beneath them.³⁷ Like Louis-Joseph Papineau in Lower Canada at a later date, Grattan certainly did not want too much democracy.

In Lower Canada an agricultural crisis would help precipitate unrest during the late 1830's. This was true also of Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century, where the agricultural situation was altering rapidly. The war provoked by the American Revolution cut off many of the markets for Irish cattle and linen, and this had two effects. In some areas a return to arable farming ensued, while in Ulster the

³⁵ Thomas MacNevin, pp. 195-197; and J.B. Woodburn, The Ulster Scot (London: Alfenon, 1914), pp. 244-7. See also Johnston, p. 5.

³⁶ Cited in Woodburn, p. 246.

³⁷ Koebner, p. 249. As James Hope, an Ulster rebel, stated: "so long as men of rank and fortune lead a people, they will modify abuses, reform to a certain extent, but they never will remove any real grievances that press down the people." R.R. Madden, Antrim and Down in '98 (Glasgow: R. & T. Washbourne, n.d.) p. 101.

weavers found increased difficulty in selling their cloth. Since the reversion to arable allowed for further subletting, the pressure for land in many areas greatly increased, while in Ulster the linen situation further undermined rural stability.

This led in 1784 to the emergence of the Peep O'Day Boys--Presbyterian and Church of Ireland weaver-peasants--who, unsupported by the gentry, began raiding Catholic homes. They burned looms or houses and looted. Lord Charlemont, and other large landowners, tried to oppose them with the Volunteers, but the Catholic peasants were wary of these mainly Protestant corps.³⁸ A Presbyterian minister then initiated a society of Defenders to protect the Catholics. Protestant landlords encouraged this, and Protestant shopkeepers sold them arms. Some Protestants even joined the society.³⁹ All of this ecumenical spirit was, of course, actuated by the fact that the Peep O'Day Boys were trying to lower rents, and were hurting the linen industry by destroying Catholic looms. The Defenders subsequently decided "not to purchase any goods from any Protestant that they knew to be (in) any way active in aiding or abetting the "Peep O'Day Boys" which had the effect of turning "many well disposed Protestants against them that hitherto espoused their cause."⁴⁰ The Peep O'Day Boys followed suit and refused to buy

³⁸ Senior, pp. 7, 8, 10.

³⁹ John Byrne, "An impartial account of the late disturbance in the County of Armagh etc.," extracts in W.H. Crawford and B. Trainor, eds., Aspects of Irish Social History 1750-1800, (Belfast: HMSO, 1969), no. 74. See also Senior, p. 8; Crawford and Trainor, no. 47. But in some cases this was motivated by increased tithes or demands for payment long in abeyance: see *ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁰ John Byrne in Crawford and Trainor, no. 74.

from Catholics, and the division along religious lines became increasingly firm and the Defenders exclusively Catholic.⁴¹ The policy of boycott, it should be noted, and the introduction of ethnicity in the place of religion, would be features of the Lower Canadian political scene before the rebellion there.

The two rival groups fought periodic battles, but the Defenders were far better organized.⁴² By 1789 there were eighteen Defender lodges, extending as far south as Dublin. Outside of Ulster they directed their attacks against landlords and the established clergy, since there were few non-Catholic peasants, while in the north they defended themselves in areas which were predominantly Protestant, but often attacked Protestant farmers in majority-Catholic areas.⁴³ The Catholic-Protestant clashes in Ulster were largely caused by the pressure of land scarcity and rising rents, but it is always tempting for the illiterate to blame those who are somehow different for their problems. The Catholics, moreover, felt that the Protestants were interlopers who had stolen their land, while the latter feared that someday they would indeed be dispossessed by the masses of the native population.

By 1791 Ireland was a land of hate, fear, and degradation, but a land in which a new torch of hope was burning, a torch lit in a nearby country whose creed of "liberty, equality, fraternity" was to inspire some Irishmen to abandon the hate and the fear, and to seek to join all Irishmen in a struggle for their own independent destiny. It was a dream which later inspired O'Callaghan and Papineau in Lower Canada.

⁴¹ Senior, p. 10.

⁴² John Byrne in Crawford and Trainor, no. 74.

⁴³ Senior, pp. 12-13.

In that year the first societies of United Irishmen were established in Belfast and Dublin. The movement supported Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. As the authorities had dreaded, it was based mainly upon the urban commercial and professional middle classes and was imbued with the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity preached by French revolutionaries. Thus it aimed at a union of all religious groupings in Ireland against British domination. It spread to most urban areas in Ireland, but in 1794 it was suppressed by the government. It would soon re-emerge as a secret, revolutionary society. Late in the year Lord Fitzwilliam, a Whig, was despatched to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, but his recall early in 1795 put an end to the aspirations of the Catholic upper and middle classes for full emancipation, and to the hopes of the Whigs and liberals for more influence in the administration and for parliamentary reform.

Fitzwilliam had been sent over to dampen the unrest, much like Lord Gosford would be sent to Lower Canada in 1835. However, as a member of the Whig section of the Ascendancy, he attempted to impose liberal reforms upon the Irish government and simultaneously to weaken the Tories' hold on power within the Irish administration. The Tories appealed to the British Prime Minister, William Pitt, and Fitzwilliam was recalled.

It has been suggested by some historians that Pitt's intention in the whole matter was to raise, then shatter, the aspirations of the Catholics, hoping thereby to provoke a rebellion which could be crushed and a union with Britain imposed, and that the effect of Fitzwilliam's

recall was, in effect, the Rebellion of 1798 and the Union of 1801.⁴⁴ This view seems to overestimate the interest of the masses of the peasantry in the issue of religious equality at the time, although it certainly did arouse the Catholic upper and middle classes.⁴⁵ However, there is strong evidence that Pitt had something like this in mind, for Fitzwilliam wrote rather desperately just before his recall:

Can it be in the contemplation of any man that a state of disturbance or rebellion here will tend to the desirable end (which, I think, I discover to be alluded to in your letter) of a union between the two kingdoms? Doubtless the end is most desirable, and perhaps the safety of the two kingdoms may finally depend upon its attainment; but are the means risked such as are justifiable, or such as any man would wish to risk in hope of attaining the end?⁴⁶

After Fitzwilliam's recall the polarization within Ireland proceeded rapidly, and the loyalist minority became increasingly adamant and extremist. General Knox, who wanted the Orangemen armed, wrote to Pelham on 14 April:

The present...is a contest of the poor against the rich, and of the Irishmen against the British Government. Many foolish men of property have

⁴⁴ See Rex Syndergaard, "The Fitzwilliam Crisis and Irish Nationalism," Eire-Ireland, 6: 72-77, and Lecky, 3: 282-83.

⁴⁵ Thomas Addis Emmet, a United Irish leader, testified before the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords in 1798: "I believe the mass of the people do not care a feather for Catholic Emancipation, neither did they care for Parliamentary Reform, till it was explained to them as leading to other objects which they looked to, principally the abolition of tithes." Ireland, Parliament, Report from the Secret Committee of the House of Lords (Dublin: W. Steater, 1798), Appendices, pp. 55-56.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Lecky, 3: 295.

joined in the rebellion from the latter motive, but the loyalty of every Irishman who is unconnected with property is artificial.⁴⁷

The government in Britain decided in 1795 that it must support the Tory, Protestant Ascendancy, and this decision led it, and its subservient regime in Dublin, to be drawn at last to the support of the Orange faction which represented only a small fraction of the Irish population. Thus whether Pitt or Portland actually wanted a rebellion and a union in 1795 or at some later date, their policy led inevitably to both. Coercion was not in the first instance what led to revolt, but rather rising rents, tithes, and the restriction of Irish trade. The government, by tying itself to the Ascendancy which alone benefitted from the first two of these, could not alleviate the plight of the peasants, just as it could not help the Irish commercial classes to the detriment of their English counterparts. Once the authorities had made their choice, the United Irish had no alternative but violence, just as the government had no other weapon with which to oppose them. Forty years later, a similar scenario would be played out in Lower Canada.

The United Irish had been dormant since their suppression in 1794, but the Fitzwilliam affair and the rural situation regenerated them, and they formally transformed themselves into a secret society.⁴⁸ (In Lower Canada the clandestine Frères Chasseurs did not arise until after the Rebellion of 1837.) The disillusionment of the Catholic and Presbyterian radicals was now shared by some liberal members of the

⁴⁷ Quoted in Lecky, 4: 57.

⁴⁸ Ireland, Parliament, Report from the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, Appendices, p. 23.

Ascendancy, and four men of considerable importance joined the new society: Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmet and Dr. William James MacNeven.⁴⁹ The first two had been members of Parliament, and all were members of the Church of Ireland, just as many of the patriote leaders were English-speaking like O'Callaghan. Fitzgerald and O'Connor had both been in France, and both were deeply influenced by their experiences there. Meanwhile, during the early 1790's Defenderism continued to spread across Ireland, and its success struck fear into the hearts of landlords. Its adherents grew strong in Roscommon and Longford, and paraded in all the counties near Dublin. In Connaught about 1,300 people were transported or forced to serve in the navy on a charge of Defenderism--most of them undoubtedly driven there from Ulster.⁵⁰

The peasants, Catholic and Protestant alike, were feeling the tightening squeeze of tithes, rising rents and prices which, because of the war, increased on what they bought (due to a lack of supply from foreign countries) but decreased on what they sold (because foreign markets were closed and the Irish market glutted by surplus British goods). This cycle could not be disassociated from the political and economic domination of the island by England, and the peasants began to grow more aware of this because of United Irish propaganda. Moreover, the raising of militia to defend Ireland was by no means popular with the peasants, and disturbances were reported in 1793 due to this

⁴⁹ Thomas Moore, The Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, 2 vols. (New York: n.p., 1831), 1: 188.

⁵⁰ W.J. MacNeven, pp. 111-112; and Lecky, 3: 420.

alone.⁵¹ The Defenders soon began planting cells in the fertile ranks of the new militia, which was mainly Catholic. Meanwhile the Protestants were organizing themselves to defend their homes against the Catholics, while landlords, including Catholics, armed their retainers.⁵²

The Defenders were made up mainly of very poor Catholics, both peasants and artisan-workers, and were led by alehouse keepers, artisans, low schoolmasters, a few middling farmers and priests in the rural areas, while in Dublin the movement was very strong among the weavers and mechanics. Their aims were to abolish taxes and cesses (such as free labour on roads), to lower rents, tithes and the price of potatoes and meal, and to redistribute property.⁵³ Ireland was becoming increasingly polarized between rich and poor, Protestant and Catholic, loyalist and radical. The situation in Ulster remained the worst. The Defenders and Peep O'Day Boys were constantly engaging in skirmishes, but the latter were becoming increasingly aggressive as the authorities came to fear the former and therefore countenance and even support the activities of their adversaries. It was necessary for the gentry to support the Protestants if they were not to face the danger of a revolt of all the peasants against them, just as it was crucial in Lower Canada in 1837 that the poor English and Irish be separated from their French-Canadian neighbours.

⁵¹ Mary Leadbeater, The Leadbeater Papers, 2 vols. (London: Bell and Daldy, 1862), 1: 198.

⁵² Senior, pp. 13-14.

⁵³ Lecky, 3: 388, 390.

In 1795, after two minor engagements, several thousand Defenders attacked a smaller Protestant force in Ulster but were repulsed, losing at least sixteen killed. Shortly after the battle the first Orange Lodge was founded.⁵⁴ The objective of the gentry who established the movement was to get control of the Protestant rural movements, and thus it was hoped to exclude poor Protestants from leadership in the organization.⁵⁵ But the gentry were not completely successful. Peep O'Day Boys continued driving Catholic tenants out of Armagh, posting signs on their doors which read "to hell or Connaught."⁵⁶ The landlords naturally did not want their tenants driven out, which lowered rents, but nevertheless at least 4,000 were hounded out of the area, many all the way to America.⁵⁷ Some may well have ended up in Lower Canada.

Thus, despite gentry effort, the Orangemen became associated with anti-Catholic violence. And, although such violence was often caused by the poor when out of the surveillance of their Orange leaders, the landlords often did join in the outrages. In Kerry a party of militia burned the village of Kilrea in December 1796; they were led by a magistrate. Nor was the violence aimed only at peasants; in Armagh a mill was burned when the owner refused to dismiss his Catholic employees.⁵⁸ The government finally authorized the recruitment of yeomanry corps in an attempt to put the landlords in control of the Protestant rural move-

⁵⁴ W.J. MacNeven, pp. 113-114; Senior, pp. 15-19.

⁵⁵ Senior, p. 20.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 20-30.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁸ Charlemont, 3: 291; and Senior, pp. 37-38.

ment, and the corps were formed for the most part through the agency of the Orange Lodges.⁵⁹ But gentry control was never firm, especially since some of the magistrates and officers were rabidly anti-Catholic themselves. Such loyalist corps were also formed in Lower Canada in 1837, principally among the English-speaking population.

By the end of 1796 the United Irish were well established in the cities, with support from the Catholic middle and lower classes throughout Ireland, while in Ulster they relied primarily on the large Presbyterian middle class. They had also formed an alliance with the Defenders. In Ulster the two groups remained separate (the United Irish were mainly Presbyterian, the Defenders Catholic), but in the south the alliance was even firmer.⁶⁰

Ireland was rapidly slipping into anarchy. The United Irish-Defender alliance in Ulster, employing tactics of intimidation and terror against landlords and magistrates, had put the government's authority in that area in severe jeopardy by early 1797, when O'Callaghan first peered out at his Irish heritage.⁶¹ There was severe trouble in several counties of the north and east, and in Armagh a force of two or three hundred rebels had attacked some troops. The Lord Lieutenant ordered the districts disarmed, and placed Ulster under martial law.⁶²

⁵⁹ Senior, pp. 45-46, 50.

⁶⁰ W.J. MacNeven, p. 48; Madden, Antrim and Down, p. 13; Moore, 2: 7.

⁶¹ See J.B. Fortescue, The Manuscripts of J.B. Fortescue, Esq. (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1892-1927), 3: 314-15.

⁶² Lecky, 4: 14, 18; Ireland, Parliament, The Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons (Dublin: James and A.B. King, 1798), Appendices, p. 117.

The United Irish-Defender alliance could, on paper, count upon the support of nearly 300,000 men by early 1798: 110,990 in Ulster, 100,630 in Munster and 55,672 in Leinster.⁶³ But the leadership was split as to whether to rise immediately, or to await French help. In the end the actions of the government dictated its policy, as William James MacNeven later testified: "The insurrection was occasioned by the house-burnings, the whippings to extort confessions, the torture of various kinds, the free quarters, and the murders committed upon the people by the magistrates and the army."⁶⁴ Inflation was also rampant and the people could bear their sufferings no longer.⁶⁵ This same desperation would strike many habitants in 1837.

The British government was determined to ensure that any rebellion which broke out would prove virtually leaderless, and between 28 February and the outbreak arrested almost all the organizers. The rebellion flared into the open on 23 May. It burned brightly for a while in Wexford, prompting Lord Castlereagh to comment:

The enemy are in great force....Their numbers consist of the entire male inhabitants of Wexford, and the greatest proportion of those of Wicklow, Kildare, Carlow, and Kilkenny. From Carlow to Dublin, I am told, scarcely an inhabitant is to be seen....Rely upon it there never was in any country

⁶³ Ibid., Appendices, chart facing p. 217, and p. 218.

⁶⁴ W.J. MacNeven, pp. 202-203.

⁶⁵ Charlemont, 2: 315; Lecky, 4: 225-226; Crawford and Trainor, no. 3; The Irish Pound 1797-1826, A Reprint of the Report of the Committee of 1804 of the British House of Commons on the Condition of the Irish Currency, introduction by Frank Whitson Fetter (London: n.p., 1955), p. 70-77.

so formidable an effort on the part of the people.⁶⁶

But the rebels were not militarily equal to their opponents, they were isolated from their upper and middle-class leaders (many of whom were in jail), and they were beset by the bogey of religious bigotry.⁶⁷ Except that it was language rather than religion which provided the major instrument of division in Lower Canada, the patriote rebels went down to defeat largely for the same reasons. Thus, the rebellion in the south was suppressed by 11 July, while the Ulster outbreak lasted from 7 June until 13 June, mainly because of religious tension and a lack of leaders. The French landing at Killala on 22 August came far too late, and the foreign force surrendered on 8 September.

The uprising was bloodily repressed and at least 15,000 peasants were killed in battle, massacred after an engagement, or executed.⁶⁸ Even Lord Cornwallis was disgusted by the brutality of his troops, and conceded that any man found near the scene of a battle "is butchered without discrimination."⁶⁹ But the southern rebels had also massacred some Protestants, and five or six hundred were probably killed during the outbreak.⁷⁰ However, reports of such massacres were greatly

⁶⁶ Lord Castlereagh to Thomas Pelham, 8 June 1798, in John T. Gilbert, ed., Documents Relating to Ireland 1795-1804 (Dublin: Joseph Dollard, 1893; reprint ed., Shannon: Irish University Press, 1970), p. 131.

⁶⁷ See Robert Daley, "United Irish, Defenders, and the Rebellion of 1798" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1975), chapter 7, for a full discussion of this problem.

⁶⁸ Lecky, 5: 105-107.

⁶⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 5: 9.

⁷⁰ W.H. Maxwell, History of the Irish Rebellion of 1798 (London: Baily, Brothers, Cornhill, 1845; reprint ed., London: George Bell, 1903), pp. 156, 252.

exaggerated in Ulster and this, as well as the attempt to make the United Irishmen there take the Defender oath, accounted in large part for the failure of the north to rise in force.⁷¹ It should be added that the northern Catholics had also become suspicious of their Presbyterian allies and, consequently, showed even less interest in the outbreak.⁷²

In the Report from the Committee of Secrecy of the British House of Commons of 1799 it was stated, in relation to the United Irish: "this Society has proved the most powerful engine, in the hands of conspirators, against the Government of their country, which has ever yet been devised."⁷³ If this was the case, then why did the Rebellion of 1798 fail: why was it, for all practical purposes, crushed within two months? The rebels were, of course, defeated militarily, and--on a primary level--military reasons led to their downfall. G.A. Hayes-McCoy comments:

...it would be absurd to call them soldiers. A handful of them had been yeomen, and there were professional fowlers, seamen and a few ex-soldiers among them but the great mass was totally unskilled in the use of arms....They lacked leaders, a plan of operations, money, arms, ammunition, supplies.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Charlemont, 2: 321-323.

⁷² See Pakenham, pp. 249-251.

⁷³ Great Britain, Parliament, Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons (London: T.C. Hansard, 1799), p. ix.

⁷⁴ G.A. Hayes-McCoy, Irish Battles (London: Longmans, Green, 1969), p. 287.

Indeed, the arrests and disarming had seriously disorganized the United Irish, and consequently there was little coordination among the various rebel forces, a pattern repeated in Lower Canada in 1837. Moreover, the French failed to arrive in time, and when they did arrive they were insufficient in number. (The patriotes would find the American aid solicited in 1838 an even more fleeting proposition.) The Irish militia, moreover, did not desert in the numbers expected by the revolutionary leaders, and the insurgent forces expected to take the field in Ulster and Munster (O'Callaghan's home province) never materialized. These were the military reasons for the rebel defeat. However, there were deeper causes which accounted for many of the failings of the rebel movement.

It has been established that the United Irish had their roots among the commercial and professional classes. These men were aggrieved by the restrictions on Irish trade which the war was greatly exacerbating, by the damage being done to the entire Irish economy by war-induced inflation, and by the limits placed on native talent and initiative by the British connection. However, their transformation into a secret society and subsequent alliance with the Defenders had introduced large numbers of the lower classes, greatly concerned with tithes and rising rents, into the organization. The same dichotomy would afflict the patriotes in 1837.

It was in the moment of crisis that the upper and middle-class nature of the leadership, and its consequent isolation from the people, fatally injured the United Irish movement. Not only were the leaders marked men, and in danger of arrest because of their social standing, but they had a lot to lose if they took part in an unsuccessful up-

rising, as did the Lower Canadian patriote leaders forty years later. Moreover, many of them were frightened by the obvious initiative of the common people and the potential for some fundamental social upheaval. Thus, many radical Catholics drew back from the abyss of revolution, and on 30 May an address pledging loyalty, and condemning rebellion, was presented to the Lord Lieutenant which had been signed by Lords Fingal, Southwell, Gormanstown and Kenmore, as well as seventy-two baronets, many gentlemen and professors of divinity, and 2,000 other Catholics of wealth or property.⁷⁵ Even such a radical Catholic as John Keogh, long the head of the Catholic Committee, publicly disavowed the rebellion and signed the address.⁷⁶ And the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, fearful of its property and of atheistic republicanism, was equally vociferous in denouncing the uprising, as was also the clerical hierarchy in Lower Canada in 1837. For example, on 6 April 1798, Dr. Edward Dillon, Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, addressed his dioceses in these terms: "you are bound, both by the law of God and the law of nature, to obey the ordinances of the State in all civil and temporal concerns....The law of God commands us to obey the rulers of the land."⁷⁷

Among the Protestants and Presbyterians the situation was similar. On 12 June, Castlereagh wrote to Wickham: "By accounts from

⁷⁵ Maxwell, pp. 447-48.

⁷⁶ R.B. McDowell, Irish Public Opinion 1750-1800 (London: Faber and Faber, 1944), p. 241; Pakenham, pp. 143-44.

⁷⁷ Viscount Castlereagh, Memoirs and Correspondence, ed. Charles Vane (London: Henry Colburn, 1848) I: 173. In May 1798 Dr. Troy of Dublin addressed his clergy in a similar vein: *ibid.*, pp. 210-11. See also McDowell, pp. 241-2.

the north today, there does not appear, as yet, any extension of the evil in that province. In some parts of Antrim, the principle of property, I suspect, rather than repentance, has induced a partial submission.⁷⁸ Many of the leading United Irishmen, moreover, were convinced of the necessity of French aid to the accomplishment of an orderly, nationalist revolution.⁷⁹ This seems a clear indication of the moderation which many Irish must have attributed to the French revolutionaries. The middle-class leaders, both mercantile and professional, did indeed want to acquire a share of the power which the propertied classes wielded, but only a few were prepared to acquiesce in any more far-reaching social upheaval. In effect, the disorganization of the United movement allowed the common people to express and fight for their more basic desires, and it was not only the religious passion, but also the levelling instinct, demonstrated by many of the Leinster insurgents before and during the rebellion, which led many of the United Irish leaders who were not in prison to abstain from participation. And many of those who did come forward, subsequently regretted their decision. In the same way, many of the English and Irish who supported the patriote cause, and many of its middle-class leaders, would desert the movement at its moment of crisis out of fear of the habitant masses.

The landed and wealthy leadership of the United Irish had raised the expectations of the people, but when the societies were virtually decapitated by government action and by treachery, the people had risen anyway, and had chosen leaders who would fight for what they--the

⁷⁸ Castlereagh, 1: 220. See also Maxwell, p. 331.

⁷⁹ Madden, Antrim and Down, pp. 105-6.

masses--wanted. Inevitably, most of those United leaders still at liberty had, at that point, abandoned the struggle. Those gentry who were not virtually forced to lead, did not; the middle classes and professionals in the towns remained dormant, in awe of the raging fury of the poor people of the land. Some of the more radical and committed leaders stood forth, some were forced to; but many of those who led the pike charges against the thin red line of royal troops and yeomen were priests, small gentry or small farmers, craftsmen or shopkeepers. And behind them were many far poorer.⁸⁰ Like O'Callaghan and Papineau in 1837, few among the "leadership" ever raised a sword or a gun.

But while the rebels were divided amongst themselves, the strength of the British-supported regime which they attempted to overthrow should not be underestimated. Militarily, for example, Castlereagh had 100,000 troops under arms in Ireland by the time French General Humbert's invasion force landed. Moreover, the government had done much to undermine, and sow dissension among, the disaffected. The disarming of various counties, especially in Ulster, had weakened the radicals, while the support which the authorities gave the Orange Lodges strengthened the forces loyal to the Crown. Moreover, this support also helped entwine sectarianism ever more deeply into the fabric of Irish politics. This naturally left the British with an opponent divided and weakened. These same tactics would later be equally devastating in Lower Canada. And the Royal Navy did all it could to prevent the French from effectively intervening.

⁸⁰ See Daley, pp. 109-22.

The government relied primarily upon various forms of suppression to disrupt the activities of the disaffected. Terror and intimidation were two of its main instruments, and these were in great part responsible for the outbreak of the rebellion.⁸¹ The radicals indeed used the attitude of the government to attract recruits, but in the end they were forced by the people to revolt prematurely.⁸² The result was not surprising, as Lord Holland commented:

The fact, however, is incontrovertible that the people of Ireland were driven to resistance, which possibly they meditated before, by the free quarters and the excesses of the soldiery, which were such as are not permitted in civilised warfare, even in an enemy's country.⁸³

The Orange faction was, of course, constantly pressuring the government to maintain a firm stand, but the question arises as to who was using whom by 1798, a question which would also arise in Lower Canada in 1837. The British had tied themselves to the Tory Ascendancy,

⁸¹ See W.J. MacNeven, pp. 202-220.

⁸² McDowell, pp. 216-7.

⁸³ Henry Richard Lord Holland, Memoirs of the Whig Party during My Time, ed. Henry Edward Lord Holland, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1852-54), 1: 113. Not only was this system of "coercion" frequently protested by the Whigs in the British Parliament, but Lords Oxford and Mortimer went so far as to state: "it is a mortal truth that cannot be denied, that if men have been driven, by flogging and by tortures, contrary to all law and reason, into open resistance, the guilt and consequences of that...resistance are imputable to those who flog and torture...and not to those who are thereby driven into resistance." The Parliamentary History of England, vol. 33 (London: T.C. Hansard, 1818), [Richard Cobbett], col. 1519. See also cols. 134, 1058 and 1488-9.

but Pitt had become increasingly dissatisfied with his allies who seemed quite unable to control the situation. He could, however, only move during or just after a crisis--such as a major rebellion. Both he and the Tory Ascendancy wanted any rebellion which did occur to take place in isolation.⁸⁴ But the risk involved would seem to indicate that Pitt was interested not only in the prevention of a successful rebellion, but also in the occurrence of an unsuccessful one.⁸⁵

By 1798 Pitt was certainly intent upon changing the system of government in Ireland by implementing a union.⁸⁶ As early as 23 February 1798, Alexander Annesly, a London solicitor and supporter of Pitt, had told Joseph Farington that "he looks upon Union with Ireland certain, probably postponed this year to be brot forwd [sic] next--must be or Ireland lost."⁸⁷ And on 28 May, only five days after the outbreak of the rebellion, Pitt wrote to Camden: "Cannot crushing the rebellion be followed by an Act appointing Commissioners to treat for an

⁸⁴ Patrick Byrne, Lord Edward Fitzgerald (London: Staples Press, 1955), pp. 195-6; Lecky, 4: 187-192; Senior, p. 95 comments: "As informers had kept the government aware of the main activities and plans of the rebel leaders, it was possible for the Castle to choose its own moment to strike."

⁸⁵ The Earl of Moira wrote to Charlemont on 25 March 1798: "I have reason to think that the minister is determined to continue the system of terror in Ireland, though it is very obvious that he sees the growing difficulties here, and is very uneasy about them. I fear that he thinks a convulsion in Ireland might be useful in distracting attention from his failures and his mismanagement of our resources." Charlemont, 2: 317.

⁸⁶ Pakenham, p. 277. See also Lecky, 4: 330.

⁸⁷ Joseph Farington, The Farington Diary, ed. James Greig, vol. 1 (London: Hutchinson, 1922), p. 228.

Union?"⁸⁸ He was undoubtedly surprised by the extent and violence of the revolt in Wexford, but there seems little doubt that he was neither surprised by, nor overly concerned with, the outbreak of open rebellion in Ireland. The Ascendancy had to be frightened, split, and discredited if a union was ever to be agreed to by the Irish Parliament.⁸⁹ Thus the Whig attempt to gain control in Ireland, first by using Fitzwilliam and then by attempting to utilize the demands of the Catholics and the United Irish, had played into Pitt's hands. The result was that the Ascendancy was seriously split and thus unable to unite in opposition to the project of a union, just as the people were divided by the religious animosities which the rebellion raised to fever heat. While the Orangemen, and their Tory Ascendancy supporters, were mainly responsible for this, there seems little doubt that Pitt and his Irish subordinates did little to stop this development until after the rebellion, when both liberals and Tories were polarized and insecure; under such circumstances Pitt was able to acquire sufficient support to pass the Union due to the fears, animosities and mutual suspicions of the two sides in Ireland.⁹⁰ This approach can only be familiar to the student of

⁸⁸ A. Aspinall, ed., The Later Correspondence of George III, vol. 3 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 68.

⁸⁹ Buckingham commented to Grenville on 3 June 1798 that a union "never can be if it be not now." Fortescue, 4: 227.

⁹⁰ Not that Pitt was sincerely sympathetic to the Orangemen; in fact, he and some of his closest adherents deplored their excesses, and the Union was indeed intended to suppress their power as well as that of the radicals. However, it was essential to Pitt that neither side be allowed to become too strong until the Union was passed. Divide et Impera describes very well his policy in Ireland from 1795 to 1800. See McDowell, p. 239 re the British attitude to Orange excesses.

mid-nineteenth century Canadian history, where much the same scenario was enacted.

The results of the polarization in Ireland, once the rebellion had broken out, were best reflected in the uncontrolled brutality of the yeomanry. General Moore commented about the situation in Wicklow:

They [the rebels] soon dispersed and threw away their arms, and the greatest part of them came in and accepted the protections which were still held out to them. They would have done this sooner had it not been for the violence and atrocity of the yeomen, who shot many after they had received protections, and burned houses and committed the most unpardonable acts...the presence of the troops was perhaps necessary for some time longer, but more to check the yeomen and Protestants than the people in general.⁹¹

And while such excesses cannot be said to have been official policy, neither can they be seen as diametrically opposed to the wishes of those

⁹¹ Sir John Moore, *Diary*, ed. Sir J.F. Maurice, vol. 1 (London: Edward Arnold, 1904), p. 311. See also Charlemont, 2: 332. That the common people were terrified by the yeomanry was by no means surprising: on 26 October 1798 Lady Sarah Napier wrote to the Duke of Richmond: "In most yeomanry corps it was an understood thing that they were to go out, without their officers, in no less number than nine (for their own safety), and shoot whomever they thought or suspected to be rebels, and not to bring them in prisoners": Thomas Moore, 2: 200. But the yeomanry was not alone in its attitude to the rebels: James Farrell described graphically the aftermath of the unsuccessful attack by the rebels on Carlow: "The army, now having no enemy to oppose them, turned their attention at once to the cabins and made short work of them by setting every one of them on fire and all that were in them, men, women and children....While the houses were burning, the rest of the enraged soldiers were in full cry through the town, dragging the terrified creatures out of every hiding-place they could find and either shooting them on the spot or hanging them out of gateways or signposts....There was no opposition, as they were nearly dead with fear beforehand without touching them at all and to make bad worse a report was circulated that all the Catholics in town would be put to death at their own doors; William Farrell, *Carlow in '98, The Autobiography of William Farrell of Carlow*, ed. R.J. McHugh (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1949), pp. 91-2.

in power. For example, on 3 June 1798 the king wrote to Henry Dundas: "I trust...that as the sword is drawn it [will] not be returned into the sheath untill [sic] the whole country has submitted without condition; the making any compromise would be perfect destruction."⁹² To avoid such "perfect destruction" the natural condition was presumably the large-scale destruction of human beings. O'Callaghan would certainly have heard much of these atrocities during his formative years.

The government, however, had not relied entirely upon terror to provoke and suppress the rebellion. As mentioned earlier, the arrests of key leaders had done much to disrupt the United Irish plans, as the issuing of warrants in Montréal would disrupt those of the patriotes. This, however, had an interesting result in Ireland, as Thomas Addis Emmet later testified:

I believe that if it had not been for these arrests, it [the rebellion] would not have taken place; for the people irritated by what they suffered, had been long pressing the executive to consent to an insurrection, but they had resisted or eluded it, and even determined to persevere in the same line; after these arrests, however, other persons came forward, who were irritated and thought differently, who consented to let that partial insurrection take place.⁹³

⁹² Aspinall, 3: 71.

⁹³ W.J. MacNeven, p. 220. And John Sheares reported to Captain Armstrong, who later informed: "the country was tired with the prosecutions, and that the people threatened, if the risings did not immediately take place, they would take the oath of allegiance, and give up their arms." T.B. and T.J. Howell, eds., A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes and Misdemeanors, 33 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orne, Brown & Green, 1816-26), 27: 314.

Thus the arrests, as also in Lower Canada, helped drive the disaffected into a premature rebellion. But they also, by removing many of the leaders, led to a great deal of spontaneity on the part of the mass of the people, something which might ensure the defeat of the rebellion, but also could signal ominous developments in the future--from the point of view of the British and their allies.

In the short term, however, the authorities had acted with great perception. Beyond even the terror and arrests and aid to sectarian passion, the government had further injected confusion, fear and suspicion into the camp of the dissidents by its use of spies. No one knew whom to trust. Fear or treachery led many United Irish officers to resign, often at the last moment, and when the rebels finally took the field they were led by such spontaneously chosen leaders as Henry Munro.⁹⁴ In Antrim, Henry Jay McCracken led the revolt, but his officers refused to report and he consequently had no organized staff at all.⁹⁵ James Hope commented: "The greatest part of our officers, especially of those who were called colonels, either gave secret information to the enemy, or neutralized the exertions of individuals as far as their influence extended."⁹⁶ And the failure of their officers to lead them created havoc among those insurgents who did assemble: they

⁹⁴ See Madden, Antrim and Down, p. 43; Ireland, Parliament, The Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, Appendices, pp. 50-51.

⁹⁵ Madden, Antrim and Down, p. 47.

⁹⁶ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 123.

were little more than a rudderless mob, and their generals not only could not count on their steadiness but were--with good reason--afraid to be abandoned by them.⁹⁷

No rebels so divided and so badly led can succeed. The United Irish leaders, due both to their class interests and to the actions of the government, had lost contact with the mass of the people. In the end, the latter rose anyway, and fought a desperate, hopeless battle against their oppressors.⁹⁸ As McCracken wrote to his wife on 18 June 1798: "You will no doubt hear a great number of stories respecting the situation of this country: its present unfortunate state is entirely owing to treachery. The rich always betray the poor."⁹⁹ O'Callaghan, Louis-Joseph Papineau and many of the other patriote leaders would also, when violence erupted, bolt for greener pastures. And others, like Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, would give information to the authorities.

Once the rebellion had been bloodily repressed, the violence which had reached its peak during the uprising nonetheless continued. In the weeks following the army's recapture of Wexford, sixty-five

⁹⁷ Pakenham, p. 259. Even such a legendary rebel leader as Joseph Holt was afraid to be betrayed by his own men: Joseph Holt, *Memoirs*, ed. T. Crofton Croker, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), I: 149-51.

⁹⁸ See the comment of Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 479: "By themselves the peasants have never been able to accomplish a revolution....The peasants have to have leaders from other classes." Too many of these leaders were either arrested or betrayed the people for the Rebellion of 1798 to have any chance of success.

⁹⁹ Quoted in Madden, Antrim and Down, p. 69.

rebels were hanged in the town.¹⁰⁰ Thousands of suspects were rounded up and held in prison or on convict ships. Many persons were imprisoned without any charge being laid against them, and the mood of the Ascendancy was anything but generous. Thus, when a member of the Committee on the Rebellion Bill moved that trials be granted all those being held, his amendment was refused without a division of Parliament.¹⁰¹

Late in July of 1798 many of the influential United Irish prisoners decided to enter into negotiations with the government in order to save their lives. These "State Prisoners" agreed to provide complete information as to the functioning of the United Irish system, but not to implicate any individuals.¹⁰² Not only did this provide the authorities with more extensive knowledge about the functioning of the revolutionary underground (their spies had already done much to satisfy their curiosity), but it helped to further discredit the leadership in captivity, and to undermine the trust that rebels still at large might have in secret association. Despite their testimony, many of the State Prisoners were held in jail for a number of years.¹⁰³ But the treat-

¹⁰⁰ Lecky, 4: 462-653; Pakenham, pp. 305-6.

¹⁰¹ A Collection of State Papers, relative to the War Against France, vol. 8 (London: J. Debrett, 1799), pp. 446 (hereafter State Papers).

¹⁰² W.J. MacNeven, pp. 154-5; Gilbert, pp. 143-44, 162-63.

¹⁰³ R.R. Madden, The United Irishmen (Dublin: James Duffy, 1858), pp. 328-9; Ireland, Prisoners Petitions and Cases, 1778-1805, State Papers (State Paper Office, Dublin), vol. 1, nos. 429 and 707. (hereafter Petitions).

ment of other, less influential men was often far more severe. As mentioned earlier, by February 1799 almost one hundred rebels had been officially executed, and 418 banished or transported. Social status tended to play a larger part in the imposition of judgment than justice did.¹⁰⁴ A similar disposition would be evident in Lower Canada in 1837, although the same level of brutality would not be present.

There was no abrupt end to the violence provoked by the Rebellion of 1798. In November widespread harassment of the army continued in several counties as well as in the area around Dublin.¹⁰⁵ John Beresford wrote to Lord Castlereagh that, due to the proposal for a union, the United Irish movement "is rising like a phoenix from its ashes."¹⁰⁶ By the fall of 1799, Edward Cooke wrote to Castlereagh: "Be assured that the Defender system is spreading dangerously."¹⁰⁷ In Connaught houghing of cattle was rampant once more, while in Cork it was difficult to collect the tithe, and attacks on those attempting to do so were frequent.¹⁰⁸ In his evidence, given on 21 February 1799, Joseph Holt even reported that 20,000 rebels were organized in Cork and were

¹⁰⁴ See John O'Donovan, "The Irish Judiciary in the 18th.- and 19th.- Centuries," Eire-Ireland, 6: 53.

¹⁰⁵ Lord Buckingham to Lord Grenville, 5 November 1798: Fortescue, 4: 361-62.

¹⁰⁶ Castlereagh, 2: 51.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 403.

¹⁰⁸ Viscount Castlereagh to Lord Portland, 14 February 1799, *ibid.*, p. 174.

planning to rise on Easter Sunday. Moreover, they were expecting assistance from the French, the Spanish and the Dutch.¹⁰⁹ Similar disturbances would agitate Lower Canada in 1838.

The proposed union was also causing disaffection, and the Marquess of Waterford wrote to Castlereagh on 9 September that he feared an alliance between those opposed to a union with the rebels, and that he was "decided the entire lower class are on the point to rise and murder."¹¹⁰ And on 8 October a wealthy Catholic informed a government agent that the rich were to be massacred.¹¹¹ However, while sporadic violence continued, and there were minor uprisings in Wicklow, Limerick and Carlow during 1802 and 1803, the back of the revolutionary movement had really been broken in 1798. The final whimper of the United Irish was the abortive uprising in Dublin in 1803 led by Robert Emmet.¹¹² At his trial he spoke those immortal words which guaranteed him his place among Irish heroes: "Let no man write my epitaph....When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then shall my character be vindicated, then may my epitaph be written."¹¹³ Certainly, while the spirit of 1798 had died, it would later be reborn under other names.

¹⁰⁹ Castlereagh, pp. 186-7.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 394.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 416.

¹¹² See J.B. Gordon, History of the Rebellion in Ireland in the Year 1798 (Workington: W. Borrowdale, 1806), pp. 213-20.

¹¹³ Cited in R.W. Postgate, Dear Robert Emmet (New York: Vanguard Press, 1932), p. 240.

Furthermore, the rancour between Catholics and non-Catholics in Ireland had been stimulated by the rebellion, especially in Ulster. On 10 June 1799 the Rev. Edward Hudson reported to Charlemont that distrust between the two communities was growing, and that even Presbyterians who had taken the Defender oath were now suspicious of the Catholics.¹¹⁴ And on 5 July he wrote:

The word 'Protestant', which was becoming obsolete in the north, has regained its influence, and all of that description seem drawing closer together. I only wish their affections may not be so entire to each other as to exclude all others from a share of them. The Orange system has principally contributed to this.¹¹⁵

This development would have ominous consequences in the future, as would the very similar growth of French-English antagonism in Lower Canada after the rebellion there.

Pitt was convinced that the system of government in Ireland had to be changed; whatever hesitation he may have had in the matter before the rebellion had been resolved. As pointed out earlier, however, Pitt may have foreseen the occasion of a rebellion as a necessary prerequisite to the enactment of a union, as Lord Glenelg may have also in Canada. Lord Holland wrote later:

The insurrection in Ireland was the chief cause of the Union, by furnishing the English Government with both the means and the pretext for accomplishing a

¹¹⁴ Charlemont, 2: 354.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

measure which in no other circumstances could have been attempted.¹¹⁶

The Union was, above all, indicative of the British desire to keep control of Ireland, something which Pitt felt could no longer be secured by the unreliable Ascendancy.¹¹⁷

The Union was first proposed on 22 January 1799. The proposal was warmly received in the British Parliament, but it was narrowly defeated in the Irish House of Commons.¹¹⁸ Pitt, however, was not prepared to allow the idea to die after a single reverse, and he set Castlereagh and Edward Cooke the task of getting the proposal approved.¹¹⁹ But there was serious, although disunited, opposition. The Orange Lodges were hostile to a union, as were many of the country gentlemen and barristers who feared a loss of influence based on the Dublin Parliament, and the merchants and bankers of Dublin who disliked the abolition of tariffs and the acquisition of a share of the British debt that would ensue.¹²⁰ After the January setback, Castlereagh

¹¹⁶ Holland, 1: 106, p. 106.

¹¹⁷ O'Farrell, p. 67 comments: "The Union testified to the failure of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy to govern Ireland. Having won constitutional independence in 1782, the Irish Parliament demonstrated its inability to please England, to pacify Ireland, or prevent its degeneration into rebellion in 1798."

¹¹⁸ See State Papers, pp. 443-4; Castlereagh, 2: 72-5; Gilbert, pp. 198-203; G.C. Bolton, The Passing of the Irish Act of Union (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 85-125.

¹¹⁹ Johnston, p. 64; Holland, 1: 139.

¹²⁰ Castlereagh, 2: 43, 46-48, 128, 150-1.

proposed to Portland on 1 February that it would be necessary to pay £1,433,000 in compensation to the latter two groups.¹²¹ This act of bribery prevented such opponents from coalescing firmly against the Union.

However, the opposition of the Orangemen and other elements of the Ascendancy had an ironic effect, as the Marquis of Buckingham reported to Lord Grenville on 2 January 1799: "The foolish and almost Jacobin association of all the Orangemen against the Union has had the fortunate effect of turning all the Catholics (except the republicans of that persuasion) to the measure."¹²² As a result, the Union received the unanimous support of the Catholic bishops, and even the benign neutrality of the Presbyterians of Ulster.¹²³ Of course, there were other reasons for their support. The Catholics hoped, and were led to expect, that further concessions would be granted them as soon as the Union was passed, while Presbyterian opinion was undoubtedly strongly influenced by a feeling among those involved in the linen industry that the Union would guarantee their protected status in the British market.¹²⁴ In Canada, a similarly arcane alliance of Lower Canadian Tories and Upper

¹²¹ Ibid., 2: 150-1.

¹²² Fortescue, 4: 435-6. Holland, 1: 138 stated: "All parties received the mention of a Union with dislike, some with abhorrence, but the violence expressed by those persons who were most hateful to the people, at the prospect of such a measure, if it did not reconcile, at least softened the opposition of the Roman Catholics [sic] to it."

¹²³ Fortescue, 4: 445, 447; Castlereagh, 2: 414.

¹²⁴ Castlereagh, 2: 80; McDowell, p. 254.

Canadian reformers supported the Union, while it was opposed by Upper Canadian Tories and most French Canadians.¹²⁵

In Ireland, national and economic arguments were brought to bear against the idea of a union, while its proponents argued on the grounds of empire and efficiency.¹²⁶ But ideas were not to decide the issue. Bribery, as we have seen, weakened one area of opposition, while deception allowed the government to maintain strong Catholic support. Thus Castlereagh wrote to Portland on 28 January 1799:

Were the Catholic question to be now carried, the great argument for a Union would be lost, at least, as far as the Catholics are concerned: it seems therefore more important than ever for Government to resist its adoption, on the grounds that without a Union it must be destructive; with it, that it may be safe.¹²⁷

The Union, of course, put the Catholic population in a weaker political situation, and although it was carried by the Irish Parliament in 1800 and came into effect on 1 January 1801, the Catholics were not enfranchised until 1829. While it may be true that the authorities were willing to lend a sympathetic ear to Catholic claims, they were certainly not prepared to challenge the opposition to them which was all too

¹²⁵ J.M.S. Careless, The Union of the Canadas (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), pp. 1-9.

¹²⁶ McDowell, pp. 250-1, 254-7.

¹²⁷ Castlereagh, 2: 140. He argued persuasively: "The Catholics, therefore, if offered equality without a Union, will probably prefer it to equality with a Union; for, in the latter case, they must ever be content with inferiority; in the former, they would probably by degrees gain ascendancy." Portland thought similarly: *ibid*, 2: 147-8.

firmly entrenched.¹²⁸ In effect, Pitt was not willing to abandon the Ascendancy and grant real power to the people. Thus bribery, with money or honors, was used blatantly to pass the Union, and the desires of the people ignored. Edith M. Johnston comments:

The fact that the Irish ruling class was separated by race and religion from the rest of the nation and only the "ascendancy" were united to the parliament of Great Britain in 1800, encouraged the divergence of the Irish nation, whose exclusion made the Union incomplete and was the ultimate reason for its failure.¹²⁹

Since the British refused to satisfy the Irish people, they were forced to coerce them. But the use of force against a subject nation, whatever its temporary benefits, rarely leads to lasting peace, as the English were long and painfully to learn.

The new century saw the Irish population continue to grow rapidly. The census of 1821 put it at 6,802,000 and that of 1841 at 8,175,124.¹³⁰ These numbers naturally put extreme pressure on Ireland's

¹²⁸ The bureaucrats Edward Cooke and William Elliot both resigned due to the continued inequality of the Catholics. Their feelings had been reflected eloquently in a letter from Cornwallis to Pelham on 15 October 1798: "I am sensible that it is the easiest point to carry [a Union]; but I begin to have great doubts whether it will not prove an insuperable bar, instead of being a step towards the admission of Catholics, which is the only measure that can give permanent tranquility to this wretched country." Gilbert, p. 193. See also Castlereagh, 2: 30 and Johnston, p. 64.

¹²⁹ Johnston, p. 297.

¹³⁰ Connell, p. 25. See also Helen I. Cowan, British Emigration to North America (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), pp. 34-5; William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World, from 1815 to the Famine (New York: Russell & Russell, 1932), p. 3, 1967; and H.J.M. Johnston, British Emigration Policy, 1815-1830 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 8.

limited acreage of agricultural land, as also did the switch to grazing after 1815 caused by falling grain prices and the opening of the English market to Irish livestock due to the steamship. The results, predictably, were rising rents and evictions on a large scale.¹³¹ Industrialization in Britain, moreover, was having a serious effect on the country; it was putting many small artisans, especially in the linen industry, out of work directly by replacement and indirectly through competition with the more advanced English manufacturers.¹³² The Union, of course, has been blamed by many for the latter situation, and there seems little reason to argue with their conclusion.¹³³ As G.R. Keep put it, "Ireland in the earlier nineteenth century still suffered a belated and inefficient colonial exploitation."¹³⁴ It was a fact which confronted the young O'Callaghan in Ireland, and a similar situation would later present itself to him in Canada.

The failure of the British authorities to grant Catholic equality

¹³¹ Cowan, p. 36; Adams, pp. 10, 19, 43, 163-67; and E.R.R. Green, "Agriculture," in R.D. Edwards and T.D. Williams, The Great Famine (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1956), pp. 91-128.

¹³² Cowan, pp. 37, 175; Adams, pp. 49-51, 107, 170.

¹³³ Oscar Handlin, Boston's Immigrants (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1941; reprint ed., 1959), pp. 30-33; R.B. McDowell, "Ireland on the Eve of the Famine," in Edwards and Williams, p. 11. This view is most strongly argued by George O'Brien in The Economic History of Ireland from the Union to the Famine (London: Longmans, Green, 1921); it is most vociferously contested by L.M. Cullen in An Economic History of Ireland since 1660 (London: Batsford, 1972), pp. 100-133.

¹³⁴ G.R. Keep, "The Irish Migration to Montreal, 1847-1867" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1948), p. 10.

after the passage of the Union drove the middle classes into an attitude of defiance which they would never really abandon; while the Protestants of the north would come increasingly to see themselves as a British garrison--a process witnessed by the spread of Orangeism and largely motivated by Ulster's increasing prosperity. But the south of Ireland did not fare so well, as its woollen manufacture collapsed and no industry developed to replace it. The Union had greatly increased the Irish debt, but there was no influx of capital--in fact the draining of resources by absentee landlords continued. Yet the population continued to increase despite the lack of urban opportunity--tied to land they did not own, and dependent on their potato patch for existence, vast numbers of peasants were on the edge of the abyss.¹³⁵

In order to protect themselves from greedy landlords, middlemen and tithe proctors, the peasants banded together into secret rural societies of "Whiteboys," "Threshers," "Rockites" or "Ribbonmen," and punished not only their enemies, but also those peasants who broke ranks and rented land from which others had been driven. Their violence was not random, but aimed at meting out "justice," for no redress was to be had from the courts of the rich. Thus one English observer described such movements as "a vast trades union for the protection of the Irish

¹³⁵ See J.C. Beckett, The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923 (London: Faber and Faber, 1966; reprint ed., London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1969), pp. 284-291.

peasantry."¹³⁶ Without middle-class leadership, however, such movements had no chance of effecting fundamental changes. The British response was coercion--and it was sufficient to keep matters under control, if not peaceful.¹³⁷

The man who attempted to unite the discontent of the Catholic middle classes with that of the rural masses was Daniel O'Connell. In 1824 he introduced penny a month membership in the Catholic Association, and soon it was being collected at Sunday Mass all over Ireland. O'Connell had defended many Whiteboys before the courts, and to many peasants he was seen as the potential leader of a Catholic revolution.¹³⁸ The clergy, moreover, sided with O'Connell, since they also wanted equal rights and ultimately the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. O'Connell's drive built increasing momentum, and his victory in the 1828 Clare by-election signalled that the moment of crisis was approaching. Shunning the use of violence, O'Connell nonetheless mobilized many large demonstrations which often had a distinctly

¹³⁶ George Cornewall Lewis, On Local Disturbance in Ireland; and on the Irish Church Question (London: B. Fellowes, 1836); pp. 95-96, 99, 212, cited by Stanley H. Palmer, "Rebellion, Emancipation, Starvation: The Dilemma of Peaceful Protest in Ireland, 1798-1848," in Stanley H. Palmer et al., Essays on Modern Revolutionary History, The Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures, no. 11, ed. Bede K. Lackner and Kenneth Ray Philp, introduction by Charles Tilly (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1977), p. 9.

¹³⁷ Palmer, pp. 8-12.

¹³⁸ James S. Donnelly, Jr., "Pastorini and Captain Rock: Millenarianism and Sectarianism in the Rockite Movement of 1821-4," in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr., eds., Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest 1780-1914 (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), pp. 135-37.

militaristic flavour. By 1829 the choice for the British was clear: either risk civil war by suppressing the Association, or concede. With a good deal of cunning, the prime minister, the Duke of Wellington, offered a compromise: Catholic Emancipation in return for the disenfranchisement of the 40 shilling freeholders. O'Connell reluctantly accepted, and the Irish electorate was reduced from 100,000 (already less than 2 percent of the population) to 16,500! O'Connell had lost most of his constituents, and would win no more political battles.¹³⁹

The peasantry, with its clerical and even some middle-class allies, now turned to an objective it had long held dear: the elimination of the tithe, paid to the Church of Ireland. The peasants simply refused to pay, and government efforts to enforce collection eventually proved futile--so the tithe was transferred in 1838 to the landlord, and passed on in rental increases. Thus the peasants' apparent victory in the "Tithe War" proved largely illusory, as did the other reforms of the 1830's brought about by O'Connell's Whig allies in the British Parliament, such as the suppression of Orangeism or the initiation of poor relief. It was all to prove far too little far too late for Ireland and its destitute masses.¹⁴⁰ What was needed was drastic action to diversify Irish agriculture and to stimulate its manufacturing potential--but the British were not about to effect the latter as it might undermine

¹³⁹ Palmer, pp. 12-15; Beckett, pp. 302-3.

¹⁴⁰ Palmer, pp. 16-20.

home industries, nor were many landlords, especially absentees, likely to reform their estates, except to clear them for grazing!

The subservience of the Irish to the English economy was, of course, facilitated by the political union of the two countries. For many, therefore, the solution to Ireland's economic difficulties lay in some greater degree of autonomy for Ireland, which was being "governed as a half-alien dependency."¹⁴¹ After his success in achieving the "emancipation" of Catholics in 1829, Daniel O'Connell turned his attention to this cause, and from 1830 until his death in 1847 repeal of the Union was the basis of his policy, and received warm support from O'Callaghan as well as Papineau and other patriotes who saw clear parallels between the political situations of Ireland and Lower Canada. O'Connell was himself also aware of these similarities, and frequently supported the petitions of the Lower Canadian Assembly in the British Parliament.

The response to O'Connell's Irish crusade by the British government was unequivocal rejection. Ireland was seen as too important strategically and economically to be allowed to drift off alone onto the shoals of republicanism and European or American alliances. As a result, when O'Connell pushed his cause to the limit in 1843, with mass meetings and inflammatory speeches--tactics he had first employed during the emancipation struggle and which the patriotes had employed in 1837--he was threatened with the violent suppression of his followers.

¹⁴¹ Beckett, p. 286.

O'Connell, not at all anxious to risk social revolution, backed down, and was subsequently arrested. Like Papineau, he attempted to use the veiled threat of revolution--which neither wanted--to achieve reform but the British authorities were quite prepared in 1843 to call his bluff, as they were Papineau's in Lower Canada in 1837.¹⁴²

However, while the British could suppress these movements, they could not put an end to the national and social yearnings which they represented, however imperfectly. In Ireland, as in Lower Canada, the middle classes were becoming restive under foreign rule, and hoped to use the discontent of the masses to shift the balance of power into their hands. Those lower classes, meanwhile, had hopes of more basic social changes, and the middle classes were just as frightened of these aspirations as were the ruling groups. In the event, the old order proved strong enough and flexible enough to survive for a few decades more. Unlike Lower Canada, Ireland could no longer afford any further delay. The result of the failure to achieve national autonomy and social change during the first decades of the century was not another

¹⁴² See Geavold O. Tuathaigh, Ireland before the Famine, 1798-1848 (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1977), pp. 42-78, 160-189 and Robert Kee, The Green Flag (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972), pp. 179-231.

rebellion; it was the utter devastation of the Famine.¹⁴³

The economic situation, moreover, was the prime cause of a phenomenon which became increasingly common even before the Famine: emigration. Lack of employment and land, the threat of rural violence, the incidence of local famines, the outbreak of cholera, even political disaffection: all of these factors called the people to a new life, as did the lure of America and later the "carrot and stick" enticements of landlords determined to "clear" their land by any means available, especially after the 1829 disenfranchisement of 40s. freeholders whose votes were therefore no longer needed.¹⁴⁴ There was little reason to stay behind if one could get away: in thirteen of the seventeen years after 1828 there was a partial failure of the potato crop.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Palmer, pp. 24-25 and Beckett, p. 293, despite their evident sympathies for the peasantry, argue that eviction for consolidation was actually a positive step, but this seems to overlook the obvious fact that such a "cure" would in fact have produced the same results as the Famine--and thus would be no "better." Palmer's argument, moreover, that such "political" reforms as Catholic Emancipation, the elimination of tithes and even repeal of the Union would not have addressed Ireland's fundamental economic problems and were therefore "superfluous" is naïve: the Irish economy was evidently not going to expand and diversify as long as it was under British control, nor were the peasantry going to thrive while tied to the land and subjected to exorbitant rents and tithes. Political change is often essential to the achievement of the very economic reforms which Palmer sees as essential. Moreover, while by 1843 the Famine could not have been averted, an independent Irish government could not have allowed such devastation to occur as did the British--no more than the latter could have allowed it in Kent!

¹⁴⁴ Adams, pp. 24, 112, 167, 172-74, 179, 184, 186; Cowan, p. 175.

¹⁴⁵ Adams, p. 179.

The situation in Ireland after the end of the Napoleonic Wars was becoming increasingly desperate, and the British authorities were anxious to encourage emigration. The Select Committee on Emigration reported succinctly in 1826:

There are extensive districts in Ireland and districts in England and Scotland, where the population is at the present moment redundant; in other words, where there exists a very considerable proportion of able-bodied and active labourers, beyond that number to which any existing demand for labour can afford employment.¹⁴⁶

At the same time, the Committee noted, "in the British Colonies in North America [etc.]...there are tracts of unappropriated land of the most fertile quality, capable of receiving and subsisting any proportion of the redundant population of this country."¹⁴⁷

It is no coincidence that the wave of emigration from Ireland which followed the renewal of peace in Europe was preceded by the failure of the potato crop in 1816 and 1817, resulting in famine and an

¹⁴⁶ Great Britain, Parliament, Sessional Papers (Commons) 26 May 1826 (hereafter Sessional Papers): "Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom," p. 3. In its report a year later, the Committee commented: "it is vain to hope for any permanent and extensive advantage from any system of Emigration which does not primarily apply to Ireland; whose Population, unless some other outlet be opened to them, must shortly fill up every vacuum created in England or in Scotland, and reduce the labouring classes to a uniform state of degradation and misery.": Sessional Papers, 5 April 1827: "Second Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom."

¹⁴⁷ Sessional Papers, 26 May 1826: "Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom," p. 3.

outbreak of typhus, as well as a wave of evictions in the latter year; nor that another such failure in 1821 led to serious scarcity and disorder, and may have helped decide O'Callaghan to leave his native land.¹⁴⁸ While no figures are available for the years 1825-28, it can be assumed, however, that the partial failure of the potato crop in 1825 caused a flurry of emigration in 1826.¹⁴⁹ And between 1829 and 1837 more than 155,000 Irish landed at the port of Quebec.¹⁵⁰ The potato was delinquent again in each year from 1829 to 1833, with the situation reaching its nadir in the famine and cholera of 1832, a pattern reflected in the number of arrivals at Quebec, which peaked in 1831 and 1832.¹⁵¹ Further failures of the crop occurred in the years 1835-37 and the pattern would continue into the 1840's, culminating in the Famine and the subsequent flood of emigrants to North America.¹⁵² The total number of Irish arriving at Quebec during the period from 1815 to 1837 then is impressive: adding the Quebec Mercury's figures for 1815-24 (they are the lowest) to those of A.C. Buchanan for 1829-37, produces a total of just over 200,000; to which a minimum of 20,000 must be added.

¹⁴⁸ See appendix A, and Radcliffe N. Salaman, The History and Social Influence of the Potato (London: Cambridge University Press, 1949; reprint ed., 1970): chart near end of book. It should be noted that emigration increased in the year(s) following a failure.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ See appendix B.

¹⁵¹ Salaman: chart near end of book.

¹⁵² Ibid.

for the years 1825-28.¹⁵³ Among these emigrants was O'Callaghan, and he was determined that they would not betray their Irish heritage in British North America.

The middle class and well educated O'Callaghan, however, was far from typical of the bulk of Irish emigrants arriving at the port of Quebec. Buchanan described them thus in 1827:

The description of persons that form the bulk of emigrants we may class under these denominations: first, the small farmer (I allude to Ireland) who has a large family and perhaps an unexpired lease of five or ten years on his farm to run; he disposes of his interest, by which he raises a little money, and added to his little stock of other useful articles, perhaps a web or two of coarse linen, some yarn stockings, and thread of their own make, their feather beds (as hardly a peasant farmer in Ireland but enjoys that comfort), and a supply of provisions of his own raising, off he goes to America. The second class I would call artisans of different grades, and servants. And thirdly, actually labouring paupers.¹⁵⁴

It was small farmers and artisans who formed the nucleus of the emigration to Quebec during the period: the very poor and labourers went.

¹⁵³ The average annual number of arrivals during the early period is 4,462; during the later years 17,301; overall, 10,544. Since 5,163 Irish arrived in 1824 and 9,614 in 1829, it does not seem unreasonable to assume a minimum average of 5,000 annual arrivals during the intervening years: see appendices A and B.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Adams, p. 192.

to England--it was as far as they could get.¹⁵⁵ One traveller, William McCormick, described such transients across the Irish Sea in 1823:

On this passage I saw a sample of the Irish that had been in England harvesting and now on there [sic] - return--a poor retched [sic] set thae [sic] are and far as I could judge as abandoned as retched [sic].¹⁵⁶

About 300 stood on the deck of his ship "as thick as the[y] could stan[d], fighting swearing and going on like a lot of devils."¹⁵⁷ Emigrants to British North America were generally more prosperous, and even some commercial and professional men like O'Callaghan migrated there. But with the first really mass influx in 1831 and 1832 the class and wealth of the Irish emigrant began the decline which would culminate during the Famine emigration. By 1836 Buchanan was commenting on the number of artisans and labourers who were arriving--a development which

¹⁵⁵ Cowan, p. 38; Adams, pp. 34, 177, 208; John J. Mannion, Irish Settlements in Eastern Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947), p. 17. An American immigration return for 1820 gives the occupations of 678 Irish immigrants. Of these, 250 (36.9%) were listed as farmers, 141 (20.8%) as labourers, 70 (10.3%) as weavers and spinsters, 81 (11.9%) as other artisans, 52 (7.6%) as merchants, and 84 (12.4%) as clerks, professional men, servant girls, et al.: Adams, p. 142. This is in contrast to the official Canadian figures for 1846 - of 123,366 of all nationalities arriving at Montreal and Quebec city, 6,733 (54.4%) were labourers, 4,831 (39.1%) were farmers and farm servants, 87 (0.7%) were house servants and the remainder, 715 (5.8%) were artisans and shopkeepers. There was not one merchant, clerk, professional man, weaver or spinster: Cowan, p. 304.

¹⁵⁶ William McCormick, "Journal of a Trip to Ireland in 1823," McCormick Papers, PAC, MG24-B70, part 1, p. 2.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

he favoured since they were needed in Lower Canada; in 1837, however, he was regretting the number of Irish paupers on the ships.¹⁵⁸

Where the emigrants came from also changed over the years. Between 1815 and 1830 by far the greatest number of emigrants came from Ulster, probably about two thirds of them. Most of the rest, about a quarter, came from Leinster. From Munster came a trickle, including O'Callaghan; from Connaught, hardly a drop.¹⁵⁹ But the situation changed during the 1830's. Munster had surpassed all other regions by 1836, and Connaught was by then sending a significant number.¹⁶⁰ The religion of these emigrants is not recorded, but the emigration historian William Forbes Adams estimates that 50-60 percent of them were Catholic.¹⁶¹

The trip across the Atlantic must have been, in itself, enough to dissuade many from attempting it. The ships were often overcrowded,

¹⁵⁸ Sessional Papers: Emigration, 1837, 42: 18-19 and 1837-38, 40: 397-8. In 1836, 4,625 of the 27,728 emigrants came to Canada on parochial aid; in 1837, the figure was 1,571 of 21,901: *ibid.* 1837, 42: 20 and 1837-38, 40: 396.

¹⁵⁹ Adams, pp. 50-1, 118-24; see also Handlin, p. 51. Of 5,393 petitioners to the Emigration Committee in 1827, 114 were from Connaught: Adams, p. 186.

¹⁶⁰ See appendix C.

¹⁶¹ Adams, p. 191. Such an estimate naturally is of limited value, especially as it appears to apply to all Irish Emigration, including that during the Famine period. Moreover, emigration from Ulster was largely non-Catholic; of 451 arrivals from Londonderry County at Quebec between 1833 and 1836, only 117 (25.9%) were Catholics; 258 (57.2%) were Presbyterians: List of Emigrants from Various Parishes in Londonderry Co. Ireland, 1833-36, PAC, MG24-158.

which allowed for cholera or ship-fever to spread rapidly. The interests of the shippers and the government often had more to do with shipping regulations than the health and safety of the passengers. Stricter regulations, moreover, meant higher fares and even more suffering.¹⁶² But the emigrant had cause to be wary of fraudulent practices as well: tonnages were often misrepresented (a heavier ship meant a faster crossing) and dates of departure delayed to the possible detriment of poor families waiting to leave who had invested everything they had in provisions for the voyage. It was common practice to give a final notice about one week before setting sail, a practice widely understood; however, some ships delayed longer: one ship in Belfast harbour in 1816 left more than two months after its first "final notice" --it had issued four in all!¹⁶³

The new world was not, however, proof against the diseases of the old, and an outbreak such as that of Asiatic cholera in 1832 had disastrous effects on both the emigrants and the local population. The clergy had cared for the sick until 1823 when a fever hospital was established at Port Levi. In 1831 a second one was built at Grosse Isle (near Quebec City) and it was here and later at Point St. Charles in Montreal that the "fever sheds" were constructed and guarded by soldiers. There the sick were quarantined in miserable conditions.

¹⁶² Edwin C. Guillet, The Great Migration (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1937; reprint ed., 1963), pp. 75-109; Adams, pp. 76-80. Between 1823 and 1827 high fares due to government regulations had restricted emigration by the poor: *ibid.*, pp. 44, 156.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-2.

Catherine Parr Traill described Grosse Isle in the summer of 1832:

It is a beautiful rocky island, covered with groves of beech, birch, ash, and fir trees. There are several vessels lying at anchor close to the shore; one bears the melancholy symbol of disease, the yellow flag; she is a passenger-ship, and has the small-pox and measles among her crew. When any infectious complaint appears on board, the yellow flag is hoisted, and the invalids conveyed to the cholera hospital or wooden building, that has been erected on a rising bank above the shore. It is surrounded with palisades and a guard of soldiers.¹⁶⁴

The rules of quarantine, however, resulted in many lives being "wantonly sacrificed by placing the healthy in the immediate vicinity of infection, besides subjecting them to many other sufferings, expenses, and inconvenience, which the poor exile might well be spared."¹⁶⁵ In Montreal alone there were 4,420 cases of cholera, which resulted in 1,904 deaths between 9 June and 21 September. About 10 percent of the population of Quebec City also succumbed, and the disease spread deep into the upper province: a total of 3,292 died in the two Canadas.¹⁶⁶ The shippers and the government were blamed for this tragedy, and many

¹⁶⁴ Catherine Parr Traill, The Backwoods of Canada (London: Charles Knight, 1836; reprint ed., Toronto: Coles, 1971), pp. 19-20.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 20 (footnote).

¹⁶⁶ Guillet, pp. 147-9, 175; Kathleen Jenkins, Montreal (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 287-9; Newton Bosworth, ed., Hochelaga Depicta; or the History and Present State of the Island and City of Montreal (Montreal: William Greig, 1839; reprint ed., Toronto: Coles, 1974), pp. 82-3; Adams, p. 185.

French Canadians even suspected a British plot to wipe them out.¹⁶⁷ A less serious cholera outbreak occurred in 1834, this time accompanied by typhus and measles, as well as a spate of shipwrecks.¹⁶⁸ O'Callaghan did his best to help these destitute arrivals, and his rôle will be dealt with in the next chapter.

After such an arduous and dangerous journey, it is indeed unfortunate that the resultant condition of the emigrants provided such a distasteful spectacle for Suzanna Moodie when she arrived at Quebec City in a private cabin in 1832. Several hundred Irish immigrants had been recently landed at Grosse Isle, and those not confined by illness to the sheds which "greatly resembled cattle pens," were washing their clothes:

The confusion of Babel was among them. All talkers and no hearers--each shouting and yelling in his or her uncouth dialect, and all accompanying their vociferations with violent and extraordinary gestures quite incomprehensible to the uninitiated... The vicious, uneducated barbarians who form the surplus of over-populous European countries, are far behind the wild man [American Indian] in delicacy of feeling or natural courtesy. The people who covered the island appeared perfectly destitute of shame, or even of a sense of common decency. Many were almost naked, still more but partially clothed. We turned

¹⁶⁷ See Jenkins, p. 289.

¹⁶⁸ Guillet, p. 147. Between 1833 and 1841, 3,366 patients were admitted to the hospital at Grosse Isle. Of these, 510 died, while 2,264 suffered from fever, 358 from smallpox, 290 from cholera (all in 1834), and 289 from other illnesses. The worst years after 1834 were 1836, 1837 and 1840: Sessional Papers, 1842: Annual Report of the Agent for Emigration, 31: 30.

in disgust from the revolting scene.¹⁶⁹

These wretches, moreover, no longer knew their place:

I was not a little amused at the extravagant expectations entertained by some of our steerage passengers. The sight of the Canadian shores had changed them into persons of great consequence. The poorest and the worst dressed, the least-deserving and the most repulsive in mind and morals, exhibited most disgusting traits of self-importance. Vanity and presumption seem to possess them altogether.¹⁷⁰

Fortunately, Mrs. Moodie was herself completely devoid of the latter characteristics. Her sister, however, showed more sympathy, if less good-breeding, in quoting an officer who remarked that "you would there behold every variety of disease, vice, poverty, filth, and famine--human misery in its most disgusting and saddening forms; such pictures as Hogarth's pencil could only have portrayed, or Crabbe's pen

¹⁶⁹ Susanna Moodie, Roughing it in the Bush (New York: n.p., 1852; reprint ed., Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962), pp. 8-9. She gave a slightly different version in The Victoria Magazine, ed. Susanna and J.W.D. Moodie (Belleville, Ontario: 1848; reprint ed., Vancouver: 1968). An officer of the island commented: "You would think they were incarnate devils; singing, dancing, shouting, and cutting antics that would surprise the leader of a circus. They have no shame--are under no restraint--nobody knows them here, and they think they can speak and act as they please; and they are such thieves that they rob one another of the little they possess. The healthy actually run the risk of taking the cholera by robbing the sick....We could, perhaps, manage the men; but the women, sir!--the women! Oh, sir!" Moodie, pp. 10-11.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14. One giant Irishman upon landing shouted-- "Whurrah! my boys! Sure we'll all be jontlemen [sic]!" *Ibid.*, p. 11.

described.¹⁷¹

These miserable creatures had been attracted to Quebec City by the cheaper fares and the advertisements in the press, especially after the appointment of A.C. Buchanan as emigration agent at Quebec City in 1828.¹⁷² Thus, far more emigrants chose to travel to Canadian than to American ports; the problem for the Canadian authorities was keeping them in British North America once they arrived. Advertisements for the United States always outnumbered those for the British colonies, and until Buchanan's appointment even those for Quebec City had emphasized the ease of travelling on to the southern colossus.¹⁷³ In 1831 Buchanan had reported that only 6,254 of 50,254 emigrants had left British North America, and in 1832 he stated: "I am warranted in stating that a very decided turn has taken place in favour of this Province, and that it is becoming more apparent every day. Very few Irish or Scotch think of going to the States now."¹⁷⁴ Adams comments, however, that Buchanan's estimates were optimistic due to his position, and the Emigrant Agent's

¹⁷¹ Traill, p. 20.

¹⁷² A.C. Buchanan testified in 1827 that the cost of a crossing to British North America was about 40s. or £3--to the United States about £5-6: Sessional Papers, 1827: "Select Report from the Select Committee on Emigration from the United Kingdom."

¹⁷³ Sessional Papers: Emigration, 1837-38, 40: 394-5; Adams, pp. 179, 197, 259-61, 413. Between 1829 and 1832, Buchanan reported that 18,713 emigrants arrived from Ireland at New York; during the same period 90,251 arrived at Quebec: Sessional Papers: Emigration, 1837-38, 40: 392-5.

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Adams, p. 198; see also p. 333.

own figures indicate that not that many of the arrivals remained in Lower Canada.¹⁷⁵ Arrivals from the United States, however, may have made up some of the loss.¹⁷⁶

As to where those Irish who did remain in Lower Canada settled, G.R. Keep contends that the British American Land Company was assisting the Irish to settle in the Eastern Townships although they really wanted to be in the cities. D'Arcy McGee commented that, unlike those in the United States, the Irish in Lower Canada mainly worked and lived on the land.¹⁷⁷ Almost certainly far more of the Famine emigrants did head for the cities where there was ready employment on the docks, factories and railways, especially as these very poor people were ignorant of Canadian farming methods, and were unwanted because of disease.¹⁷⁸ But many of the earlier, better-off Irish would seem to have turned to the rural

¹⁷⁵ See appendix D.

¹⁷⁶ This was at least the opinion of Lord Aylmer in a letter to Lord Goderich, the Colonial Secretary: cited in Marianna O'Gallagher Saint Patrick's, Quebec (Quebec: Carraig Books, 1981), p. 30.

¹⁷⁷ Keep, pp. 39-41; Thomas D'Arcy McGee, The Irish Position in British and Republican North America (Montreal: n.p., 1866), p. 13. Between 1825 and 1832, the Canada Company sold 363,000 acres of land, most of it to emigrants: Present State of the Canadas (London: Geo. Hebert, 1833), p. 144.

¹⁷⁸ Kenneth Duncan, "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West," in M. Horn and R. Sabourin, eds. Studies in Canadian Social History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), pp. 145-6. Duncan also believes the Irish chose the cities due to their clan system which was impossible in the isolation of rural America: ibid., pp. 155-8. See also Mannion, p. 5.

areas in Lower Canada, rejecting them only later.¹⁷⁹ This point must not be overemphasized, however, since the 1844 census showed that the largest concentration of Irish in the province lived in or near the cities of Montreal and Quebec, as well as in the Eastern Townships and the other counties south of the St. Lawrence above Quebec.¹⁸⁰

Among the thousands of Irish emigrants who landed at Quebec in 1823 was a young medical student named Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan. Why he chose to leave Ireland and come to Canada the historian can only speculate. Surely he must have been seeking to escape a land beset by poverty and violence, by hatred and despair, and a destiny clouded by the legal inequality of Catholics and the constitutional servitude of the Union. Across the Atlantic, it must have seemed to him, lay opportunity and hope.

O'Callaghan had left Ireland, however, not for the republic of the United States of America, but for a land which was also tied to the British crown, a land whose population was also primarily agricultural and Catholic while its ruling class was alien and remote, a land also won by conquest. And in his new homeland he would find many of the injustices he had undoubtedly been seeking to leave behind. The heritage of his Irish past was not something O'Callaghan ever sought to renounce. In Lower Canada, however, his birthright would prove to be not only remembered, but virtually resurrected.

¹⁷⁹ Dorothy S. Cross, "The Irish in Montreal, 1867-1896" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1969), pp. 32-37 says many Irish moved to Montreal or westwards from rural Quebec between 1867 and 1896. See also O'Gallagher, pp. 31-2.

¹⁸⁰ See appendix E.

CHAPTER II

EMIGRANT

1823-1833

Let every man coming to the country be thrown on his own exertions and on his own resources; and he will eventually succeed.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1831¹

When Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan arrived in Lower Canada in 1823 at the age of twenty-six, he was thrust into a world which he must have found very alien and very different from the polite society to which he must have been accustomed in Europe. This chapter will focus on his early years in his new homeland--it will introduce us to the Quebec City where he lived for most of the period from 1823 until 1832, to the political turmoil within the province, and to Jocelyn Waller and Daniel Tracey, O'Callaghan's predecessors as editor of the Montreal English language reform newspaper, leader of the Irish reformers of Montreal, and advocate of the alliance of Irish and French reformers in the province. O'Callaghan was involved in various activities during the period, and by 1832, although an inhabitant of Quebec City, had so established his liberal credentials and ties to the Irish community and to the reform leadership, that he was summoned to Montreal to replace the fallen Tracey.

¹ O'Callaghan to Father Patrick McMahon, 21 December 1831, Sessional Papers, 1833, p. 19 and PAC, MG11-Q206, pt. 1.

Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan was by no means one of the earliest Irishmen to settle on the shores of the St. Lawrence. Even during the French regime there had been a significant number of Irish, most of them soldiers or their descendants, in the province. Included among them was the step-father of Madame d'Youville, the foundress of the Grey Nuns in Canada.² Some were among those "wild geese" who flew from Erin's shore to fight anywhere and at anytime, alongside England's foes. Still others came later, with James Wolfe in 1759, and these also are a commonplace of Irish history: the vanquished conquering.

Those Irish who came to settle in Canada or in the United States between the Conquest and 1815 were mainly Presbyterians from Ulster who were seeking to raise their families in an atmosphere free from political turmoil, rural violence and economic stagnation.³ The number

² John O'Farrell, "Irish Families in Ancient Quebec Records," 1872, reprinted in The Journal of the American Irish Historical Society 28 (1929-30), argues that of the 2,500 families in Lower Canada in 1700, about 100 were Irish, and another thirty were of mixed heritage (p. 157) and that elements of the Irish Brigade were active in Canada during the Seven Years' War and subsequently settled here (pp. 168-72). See also Thomas D'Arcy McGee, A History of the Irish Settlers in North America (Boston: Patrick Donahue, 1855; reprint ed., n.p.: Jerome S. Ozer, 1971), p. 41, also contends that the Irish Brigade served under Montcalm at the siege of Oswego in 1756. Thomas Guerin, The Gael in New France (Montreal: n.p., 1946) argues that few Irish arrived in the colony before 1700, although a goodly number did thereafter, and that, although some Irish soldiers served in the French forces in Canada, none of the regiments of the Irish Brigade ever served there: he directly contradicts O'Farrell's major arguments (pp. 6-8). While Guerin's work is more definitive and far less controversial, it is not on all points convincing, and certainly fails to undermine O'Farrell's arguments as to the distortion of Irish family names in early French-Canadian records, although the latter does on occasion allow himself too much liberty. John Francis Maguire, The Irish in America (New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier, 1887), p. 97, numbers the Irish in New France at fifty families. See also *ibid.*, pp. 20-23; and T.P. Slaterry, Loyola and Montreal: A History (Montreal: Palm, 1962), p. 17.

³ See Cowan, pp. 29, 34.

of Irish in Canada increased slowly as conditions in Ireland worsened, and, as previously established, between 1815 and 1837 well over 200,000 Irish immigrants, Catholic and Protestant, arrived at Quebec City. But not all of these emigrants remained in Lower Canada. The majority of them moved on to Upper Canada or the United States. Paupers, however, were likely to remain in Quebec or Montreal where they could find immediate employment: "I have known poor wretches arrive in Quebec that would be hardly hired in Ireland, and they will in the course of one summer's work realize fifty to eighty dollars."⁴ By 1844, of Lower Canada's total population of nearly 700,000, 75 percent were French Canadians, 12 percent English Canadians, 6 percent Irish and 2 percent respectively from Scotland, England and the United States.⁵ Since the 7 percent of the population which was Catholic but not French-Canadian must have been largely Irish, it seems safe to assume that at least 5 percent of the population was made up of Irish Catholics or their descendants.⁶

⁴ Sessional Papers, 1827, p. 175

⁵ See appendix E. "Irish," "English," "Scots" and "Americans" refers to place of birth, not ethnic origin. Thus the children of Irish parents born in Canada would be considered English or French Canadians, depending on mother tongue. This bureaucratic factor, as well as intermarriage, makes it impossible to accurately compute ethnic groupings. The actual population was 697,084, of whom 524,244 were French Canadians, 85,660 English Canadians, 43,982 Irish, 13,393 Scots, 11,946 Americans, and 11,895 English.

⁶ Lower Canada, Census, 1844, in Canada, Census, 1871, vol. 4: "Censuses of Canada, 1665 to 1871" (hereafter Census, 1844). But this figure does not include those descendants of Irish emigrants who had become assimilated to the French-Canadian majority. There were 48,195 more Catholics than French Canadians in Lower Canada, according to the Census. It is unfortunate that the earlier censuses do not provide figures for either background, since the population at the time was expanding rapidly from 471,875 in 1827, and there is no doubt that the number of "foreigners" in the province also increased dramatically during these years.

When O'Callaghan arrived in Quebec City in 1823, at the age of twenty-six, he had come to seek his destiny in a world he believed to be freer and less debased than his birthplace.⁷ Precisely why he had left Ireland is unknown, but it may be speculated that he was in search of both liberty and opportunity. The son of a merchant or shopkeeper in Mallow, County Cork, he had been educated in Dublin and Paris for a medical career, and had the ability, often denied the poor, to leave the land of his birth in search of fame and fortune.⁸ This decision, however, was not without its price, for it meant separation from his family--the members of which, with one exception, he would never see again. Two of his brothers were priests and missionaries, one of them in the West Indies and the other in London! The third, ironically, was a British officer and rather famous duellist, who eventually succumbed to the hazards of the latter occupation. His two sisters both married, one of them taking for her second husband the well-known Cork barrister Frank Walsh.⁹

⁷ Monet, p. 554; Dictionary of National Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1917), 14: 790; and MOCB, p. 624, give 1823 as O'Callaghan's date of arrival in Quebec City; O'Gallagher, p. 50, states "around 1824 or 1825."

⁸ He had received a Bachelor of Arts degree from an Irish college, and studied medicine for two years in Paris, where the republican atmosphere had undoubtedly affected his thinking in political and social matters: Maureen Slattery Durley, "Dr. Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, His Early Years in Medicine, Montreal, 1823-1828," CCHA, Study Sessions, 47 (1980), p. 25. But in a letter to Mackenzie enquiring about the cost of a newspaper advertisement he wished to place, he described himself as "a licentiate of one of the universities of Scotland." Possibly he had received the degree from an Irish college affiliated with a Scottish university: O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, August 1843; W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, Archives of Ontario [hereafter AO], MS 516.

⁹ Durley, p. 28; Guy, pp. 1-2.

O'Callaghan must have been struck by the sight of Quebec as his ship anchored beneath its cliffs. Certainly it was awe-inspiring, as Susanna Moodie found a few years later:

Every perception of my mind became absorbed into the one sense of seeing, when, upon rounding Point Levi, we cast anchor before Quebec. What a scene! Can the world produce such another? Edinburgh had been the beau idéal to me of all that was beautiful in Nature--a vision of the northern Highlands had haunted my dreams across the Atlantic, but all these past recollections faded before the present of Quebec.¹⁰

But the city was unfortunately somewhat less perfect than it seemed from the river below to the exalted mind of Mrs. Moodie. It did have a number of impressive public buildings, including the residence of the Governor (the Castle of St. Louis), the House of Assembly, the Catholic (Notre Dame de la Paix) and the Anglican (Holy Trinity) Cathedrals, the General Hospital, the Hotel Dieu, the Seminary, the Courthouse and the Prison.¹¹ Culturally at this time it boasted the Literary and Historical Society and the Saint Jean Baptiste Society, and later the Institut Canadien.¹² It also had its British garrison and frequent visits from the Royal Navy, which certainly would not have made O'Callaghan feel comfortable. But many of the people, especially the emigrants, were

¹⁰ Moodie, pp. 28-29.

¹¹ Present State of the Canadas, pp. 15-16; A.G. Doughty and N.E. Dionne, Quebec under Two Flags: A Brief History of the City (Quebec: Quebec News, 1903), pp. 252, 291-4, 361-8, 380, 386, 398; and Joseph Sanson, Travels in Lower Canada (London: Sir Richard Phillips, 1820; reprint ed., Toronto: Coles, 1970), pp. 19-29.

¹² A.B. Routhier, Quebec (Montreal: Montréal Printing and Publishing, n.d.), p. 244.

poor, and eked out their existence among the narrow streets of the Lower Town, of which one traveller wrote in 1820: "The lower town,... is a dismal congeries of the most wretched buildings, rising, in darkness visible, amidst every kind of filth, between the rock and the river."¹³ Even Mrs. Moodie referred elsewhere to the city as a "filthy hole."¹⁴

The City was growing rapidly during the period. In 1827 it had a population of 30,954; by 1844 it would reach 45,761. In 1831 it counted 4,911 houses; by 1844, 6,714. In 1827 it had fourteen French Catholic churches, two Anglican, one Presbyterian and one Wesleyan, as well as twenty-five schools and twelve colleges. Economically, its shipbuilding industry was expanding rapidly, and this would augment the profits from its busy port. As well, in 1844 it had twenty-seven grist mills, twenty-three saw mills, nine flour mills, twenty-nine tanneries, and four breweries.¹⁵ And the Bank of Quebec had been established in 1818.

Many Irish chose to settle in the city. The 1844 census found that of a population of 45,761, there were 7,267 Irish (16%) and 8,672 Catholics who were not French Canadians.¹⁶ And there were almost

¹³ Sanson, pp. 18-19. He continued on to describe the Upper Town: "The cathedral and the seminary for the clergy, together with the Jesuits' college opposite, now converted into a barrack for the troops,... together with the Hotel Dieu... the monastery of the Recollets, now taken down, to make room for more useful edifices; and the convent of the Ursuline nuns, with other religious establishments, and their courts and gardens, occupied at least one-half of the ground, within the walls, leaving the streets narrow, irregular, and invariably up-hill and down."

¹⁴ Moodie, p. 16.

¹⁵ Census, 1827, 1831 and 1844, pp. 95-158; and Routhier, p. 244.

¹⁶ Census, 1844. See appendix E for the figures regarding national origin. It seems safe to assume that most Catholics who were not French-Canadian were Irish.

certainly over 6,000 Irish Catholics in the city by the early 1830's.¹⁷ Of these Irish a good number were involved in the timber trade in various capacities. A few were rich shippers, but most were cullers who sorted and measured timber, cove-owners who sold timber to the shippers, or lumbermen who worked at the port. Many others were longshoremen who loaded and unloaded ships in the harbour. Unfortunately for the last two groups, there was little work for them during the winter months.¹⁸ Many of them lived along Champlain Street beneath Cape Diamond--in an area called the "Cove"--where thirty of them were killed by an avalanche in 1836 and a rockslide in 1841.¹⁹

Later in the century Irish Catholics would own most of the harbour area, and J.F. Maguire would estimate the liquid capital of the community in about 1867 at £330,000, as well as enormous holdings in real estate. But most were far from well-off when they arrived.²⁰ The Irish Protestant community in the city was also prominent, but it was the Irish Catholic who was more visible than any of the other immigrants, because, while he rarely spoke French, "he absorbs a large and valuable portion of the employment, and pushes his way into active rivalry with the more wealthy class in various branches of business."²¹ It is interesting that the rivalry which largely began between the Irish

¹⁷ Doughty and Dionne, p. 276. Marianna O'Gallagher, Saint Brigid's, Quebec (Quebec: Carraig Books, 1981), p. 18 indicates there may have been 7,000 by 1830.

¹⁸ Maguire, pp. 91-82; J.I. Cooper, "The Quebec Ship Labourers' Benevolent Society," CHR, 30 (1949): 4.

¹⁹ Memoriam Sheehy, "The Irish in Quebec," CCHA Report, 1943-44, p. 42.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

and French Canadians for low-paying jobs did not abate as the former gradually ascended the social ladder.²²

When O'Callaghan arrived in the city in 1823, he would soon have become aware of the rather mixed feelings with which the French Canadians were receiving their new Irish neighbours. The Society for Emigrants had been established five years earlier to aid those arriving from foreign shores.²³ But Le Canadien had reported on 22 May 1822:

La société des émigrés établie par une bien-faissance compatissante et sensible aux besoins de l'humanité, a arraché bien des malheureux à une mort certaine, mais en même tems elle a fait venir dans cette contrée un bien plus grand nombre d'étrangers, qui pour la plupart fainéans, aiment mieux affamer nos villes que défricher des terres. Enfin la société s'est convaincue qu'il falloit absolument arrêter le mal déjà trop enraciné; elle a déclaré qu'elle ne donneroit à l'avenir de secours aux Emigrés que dans un extrême besoin; et tous les vrais Canadiens regarderont sans doute cette résolution comme indispensable.²⁴

By 1831 the attitude of grudging acceptance, even toward well-off arrivals like O'Callaghan, had not altered. The same newspaper

²² See Maguire, p. 95. Sheehy, p. 39 comments: "there was a numerous, well-established, and prosperous Irish community in Quebec before the 'middle forties'...the foundation of the Irish group as a social unit in the life of the city were well and firmly laid long before the epidemic of '47 and '48 broke out."

²³ It was established in 1818: Marianna O'Gallagher, Grosse Isle (Quebec: Carraig Books, 1984), p. 18.

²⁴ Le Canadien, 22 May 1822. It commented shortly thereafter: "les émigrés continuent d'arriver en ce pays. Nous avons la satisfaction de voir qu'un bon nombre partent immédiatement pour aller habiter la province supérieure." : *ibid.*, 12 June 1822 (p. 6, col. 3).

commented: "Il est arrivé à peu près 16,000 émigrés, la plupart d'Irlande, depuis l'ouverture de la navigation, et les dernières nouvelles portent à croire qu'il va en venir cet été une quarantaine de milles. La grande affluence des émigrés à ce port a fait hausser le prix des denrées."²⁵ And an editorial of 1834, approving a tax on arrivals, stated: "Il paraît arrêté, en Angleterre, d'envoyer au Canada chaque année, une centaine de milliers de pauvres, qui sont maintenant à la charge des différentes paroisses."²⁶ At the same time it may be an indication of their lack of acceptance, as well as the problems of dislocation and poverty which all or many of them faced, that so many Irish, English and Scots were among those charged with serious crimes in the Quebec district during the period.²⁷ It would be one of the great challenges faced by O'Callaghan and the patriotes to overcome this growing hostility.

How long O'Callaghan remained in Quebec City after his arrival is not clear, but early in 1826 he successfully applied for the position of apothecary and steward at the newly established Montreal General Hospital.²⁸ It may well have been that he first took courses at the Montreal Medical Institution, which would undoubtedly have helped his case when

²⁵ Ibid., 28 May 1831.

²⁶ Ibid., 7 February 1834. It is of interest that Papineau opposed this proposal: *ibid.*, 20 January 1834.

²⁷ In three assizes of the criminal court in 1819 and 1820, of those tried twenty-three bore English names, eight Irish and only twenty-two French: *Le Canadien*, 13 October 1819; 4 October and 22 November 1820. In an assize of 1823, fifteen of those tried were English, ten Irish and ten French: *ibid.*, 24 September 1828; and in one of 1832, twelve were English, seven Irish and eight French: *ibid.*, 28 December 1832. Thus the trend during the period is obvious: if the figures for these five assizes are totalled, the result is fifty English (43%), twenty-five Irish (22%) and forty French (35%).

²⁸ Durley, p. 34.

the Hospital was seeking an apothecary.²⁹ Once in his post at the hospital, the aspiring doctor was responsible for preparing medications, supervising students and collecting patients' fees, even if they were paupers, and he was often assigned to work in a ward by the medical officer. Many of the patients were Irish Catholic immigrants, and they undoubtedly appreciated the care given to them by a fellow expatriate.³⁰

O'Callaghan lived in dilapidated quarters near the hospital, and took his meals with the matron and house surgeon. They seem to have consumed several gallons of beer each week, which is not surprising when it is considered that the patients in the hospital were regularly treated with sometimes prodigious quantities of alcohol.³¹ By 1827 hard times were upon the land, and the hospital's Board of Governors decided to try to cut its costs by asking O'Callaghan to relinquish his post, although his contract extended for another year. The apothecary refused, indicating that he could not leave his situation until licensed to practice medicine. In June he reiterated his stand, since he had failed to qualify before the Board of Examiners. Only in November, when he had finally obtained his certificate, did he reconsider his stand,

²⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 29-33. Durley seems to assume something of this kind, but provides no evidence that O'Callaghan was even in Montreal before 1826. She states that he "emigrated to Montreal" in 1828, but gives no substantiation. Most sources, including Guy, p. 6, assume that O'Callaghan immigrated to Quebec City and remained there from 1823 until at least 1830, but this is evidently incorrect. It seems likely that he did land at Quebec, but moved to Montreal shortly after his arrival. His move to Quebec in 1828 seems easier to comprehend had he lived there previously.

³⁰ Durley, pp. 35-37.

³¹ *Ibid.*

and in December he agreed to give up his post on 1 January 1828, in return for a severance payment of £20.³²

O'Callaghan, now qualified to practice medicine, remained temporarily in Montreal, even discharging on occasion some of his old duties--now without pay. However, as he had no hope of an appointment to the hospital staff and the prospects of a private practice were apparently brighter in Quebec City, he moved there sometime in 1828.³³ Despite an unprepossessive manner and appearance, O'Callaghan led an active social life, and could certainly have settled down and pursued his medical career.³⁴ But such would not be the case.

O'Callaghan and other Irish and French Canadians were determined to forge positive links between the two communities. Although now a practicing physician--a profession neither as respected nor as lucrative as it is today--O'Callaghan devoted a great deal of his time to political and social activities.³⁵ When a Society of Friends of Ireland was established at Quebec in 1829, O'Callaghan became its secretary.³⁶ This group included many French Canadians as well as Irishmen, and while its stated objective was the liberation of Ireland, it also aimed at uniting the Irish and French Canadians within the city.³⁷ The young doctor was

³² Ibid., pp. 37-38.

³³ Ibid., p. 39.

³⁴ Guy, p. 6 and Monet, p. 554.

³⁵ Monet, p. 554.

³⁶ O'Gallagher, Saint Patrick's, pp. 13, 51.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

also corresponding secretary of the Quebec Mechanics' Institute, and set up, with Dr. Joseph Painchaud, a clinic to help immigrants arriving at the port.³⁸

The Irish had made their presence felt in Quebec as early as 1765, when the Irish Protestants in the city celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a service at the Recollect Church, a dinner and a ball.³⁹ But it was not until 1817, when a sufficient number of Irish Catholics had settled in the city, that they petitioned Bishop Plessis for a priest who could speak English. They suggested one Charles French, then resident in the town. The petition included a subscription from fifty-three mainly Irish persons for £135.⁴⁰ In 1819 a special mass was celebrated to honour St. Patrick's day.⁴¹ Three years later a regular English mass was inaugurated under Father Lawlor, who was soon after replaced by Father Patrick McMahon who served there from 1822 to 1825 and again from 1828 until 1851. In 1828 English-language services were moved to the Church of Notre Dame des Victoires in the Lower Town, but it was just as inadequate, and the desire of the Irish and other English-speaking Catholics of the city for their own church had already led to the establishment of a committee to pursue the matter. This group raised money and considered sites for the Church, but was unable to proceed

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 50-51, 59.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 33. This petition could even date to 1812. See (ibid., footnote 45 (chapter 1)).

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 32-33. See also John A. Gallagher, "Saint Patrick's Parish - Quebec," CCHA Report, 1947-48, p. 72.

further because of the lack of cooperation by the Bishop and the Fabrique.⁴²

Nothing, therefore, was effected until 1831 when the committee moved to finance and build the church on its own. Bishop Lartigue of Montreal was dismayed by this demonstration of "separatist" inclinations.⁴³ Among the leaders on the committee was O'Callaghan, and he served for some time as its Secretary. In November 1831 he addressed a request for financial assistance to the Fabrique:

The Committee of Management of the Congregation of Catholics speaking the English Language having been most actively and I have the pleasure of informing you, most successfully engaged since I had last the honor of addressing you, in realizing funds for the completion of St. Patrick's Church; (the construction of which is now as far advanced as the season would permit). They have directed me to request that you will at as early a date as possible, have the goodness to call the attention of the Marguilliers of this parish to the circumstances and lay before them the expectation the Committee entertains of receiving a pecuniary aid from the Fabrique to enable them to prosecute with all possible economy their undertaking which they have commenced.⁴⁴

A loan on favourable terms of £500 was in the end secured, and the new church, achieved through the tireless efforts of the committee (and its acceptance of subsidiary status for the church), as well as many expressions of public opinion in its favour, was finally dedicated on 7 July

⁴² Gallagher, pp. 72-73; and O'Gallagher, pp. 43-46, 67-79. See also the Vindicator, 11 and 18 January 1831.

⁴³ Bishop Lartigue to Bishop Panet, 19 February 1831, Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec, (hereafter RAPQ), 1943, p. 99. See the Vindicator, 11 and 18 January 1831.

⁴⁴ O'Gallagher, Saint Patrick's, pp. 90-92.

1833.⁴⁵ Shortly thereafter O'Callaghan departed for Montreal to take over the direction of the Vindicator, and he was presented with a silver snuff box by his fellow members on the committee.⁴⁶ Ironically, the construction of the church had received little support from French-Canadian clergy or laity, and even the reform leader Louis-Joseph Papineau had refused to subscribe to it because he was "opposed to National churches".⁴⁷

The political situation in Lower Canada at the time of O'Callaghan's arrival was turbulent, as the French-Canadian commercial and professional classes, under the leadership of the seigneur Papineau, were restive under a system which assured the control of government and the domination of business to a relatively small group of English and Scots administrators, officers and entrepreneurs. Since the Constitutional Act of 1791 had created an elective legislative assembly in the province, it had become increasingly dominated by French-Canadian members who took a dim view of the sinecures held by British and English-Canadian bureaucrats whose salaries were paid for by funds not subject to legislative control.⁴⁸ The English merchants, meanwhile, relied

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 17, 92-94. See also Gallagher, pp. 71-80 and the Vindicator, 12 July 1833.

⁴⁶ O'Gallagher, Saint Patrick's, p. 51.

⁴⁷ Cited by Mary Finnegan, "The Irish-French Alliance in Lower Canada, 1822-1835" (M.A. Thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1982), p. 54.

⁴⁸ The Civil List, revenues from Crown lands and grants or petitions awarded by royal prerogative: Joseph Schull, Rebellion (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), p. 9.

upon the administrators for legal and financial support, and opposed the rule of men dedicated more to the principles of property than those of commerce.⁴⁹ In 1822 these merchants had appealed to the imperial parliament to reunite the Canadas, but this had been thwarted by a coalition in London of French-Canadian leaders and English reformers.⁵⁰ Five years later Lord Dalhousie's refusal to accept Papineau as speaker of the Assembly had caused the reformers to garner 87,000 names on a petition to the Imperial Parliament for a redress of the province's grievances.⁵¹ It was inevitable that, in this impasse, both sides would seek, with increasing intensity, to solicit the support of the growing Irish community.

The Catholic Hibernians shared the language of the rulers and the religion of the ruled in Canada. The British government and its representatives in Lower Canada had undoubtedly hoped that the influx of Irish would help to balance the preponderance of population enjoyed by the French Canadians in the province. Instead, they were discovering to their dismay that, despite the rivalry of competition for the same jobs,

⁴⁹ See *ibid.* Donald Creighton, The Empire of the St. Lawrence (Toronto: Macmillan, 1956; reprint ed., 1970), p. 126, argues that the merchants' progressive stand was thwarted by French-Canadian cultural and economic stagnation, but Stanley Ryerson, Unequal Union (Toronto: Progress Books, 1968), pp. 40-41, 84, argues that the commercial monopolists stood in the way of the development of indigenous industrialism, and that the reform movement was fundamentally national, democratic and bourgeois.

⁵⁰ Mason Wade, The French Canadians, vol. 1 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955; reprint ed., 1968), pp. 130-31; Helen Taft Manning, The Revolt of French Canada, 1800-1839 (London: Macmillan, 1962), p. 169; Fernand Ouellet, Lower Canada 1791-1840, trans. Patricia Claxton (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), pp. 201-4. The Tories tried unsuccessfully to revive the union plan in 1828: Manning, p. 169.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35.

the strangeness of tongue and the anxious conservatism of almost all immigrants, strenuous efforts were being made by radical leaders among the Irish to forge an alliance among all the disadvantaged in Lower Canada, and particularly between the French-Canadian and Irish Catholic middle and lower classes. For Papineau and his supporters in the cause of a general reform of the administration of Lower Canada were faced by a major difficulty: lacking the military power to overthrow the British regime by force, they were determined to achieve this end by constitutional means. In fact, they were aiming, whether consciously or not, at achieving a peaceful revolution--one of history's rarest phenomena. Such a result, however, could have no chance whatever of success unless supported by the vast majority of the population. But Papineau had always been confronted by the existence within the province not only of the inevitable opposition of many bureaucrats and conservatives to his platform of democratic reform and national recognition, but also of the existence of a sizable English-speaking minority. That minority received significant reinforcement by way of emigration throughout the years of Papineau's tenure as leader of the forces of reform. By the 1830's, in fact, about half of the population of Montreal, and two-fifths of that of Quebec City, was English-speaking. It was essential, therefore, for Papineau to capture the support of a large section of this minority, and equally important to his opponents to prevent him from doing so. Thus the period would witness an increasingly bitter contest for the hearts and the votes of the most volatile group within that minority--the Irish. In this battle the reformers were quite successful for many years.

The first leader of this movement, and thus O'Callaghan's predecessor, was the Irish Protestant Jocelyn Waller, the son of the Baronet Sir Robert Waller, of County Tipperary in Ireland, who had come to Canada as Government Clerk in 1820. He resigned the position soon after, and in 1825 took over the editorship of the Canadian Spectator.⁵² Undoubtedly struck by the parallels between the constitutional situations of Lower Canada and of Ireland before the Union, when the Irish Parliament had struggled valiantly to maintain its prerogatives against a British-appointed administration, Waller placed the Canadian Spectator firmly on the side of reform and the Lower Canadian Assembly. When the government and its Tory allies tried to rush a union of the Canadas through the British Parliament in 1822, the Spectator did not mince its words: "The advocates of the union never cease disparaging the House of Assembly. Slander is the very ground work of their project. A project whose end is tyranny, whose material is injustice, could not spring from a more suitable foundation."⁵³ As a result of his aristocratic origins, Waller was able to offer Papineau the good offices of his brother and other men of influence when the French-Canadian leader travelled to England early in 1823 to oppose the union proposal.⁵⁴ In the end the opposition to the project proved too strong, and the Spectator could

⁵² La Minerve, 5 September 1831; and MDCB, p. 870. He came to Canada as "Greffier de la Couronne." He had an annual income of £200. The Canadian Spectator first appeared on 19 October 1822.

⁵³ Canadian Spectator, 9 November 1822. Attacks on the project of union were continuous during the next three months.

⁵⁴ Sir Robert Waller to Louis-Joseph Papineau, 19 February 1823 and Jocelyn Waller to Sir Robert Waller, 19 May 1823: Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 1: 428-32, 477-79.

announce triumphantly on 9 April 1823: "NO UNION."⁵⁵

The Spectator was a constant supporter of the reform program of Papineau, and of the alliance of French Canadians and Irish against the British Establishment. The paper kept its readers informed of O'Connell's speeches and activities in Ireland, and of the success or failure of liberal causes in Europe.⁵⁶ Early in 1824 Waller called on another reformer, Ludger Duvernay, to move his press to Montreal in order to publish the Canadian Spectator, since his previous connection with the Spectateur Canadien was about to terminate.⁵⁷ He stressed the financial need for "moderate terms in the present situation of affairs," and added: "I apprehend that an opportunity of a most excellent kind is now open to establish a good french Paper either separately or on the same sheet with subject."⁵⁸ Three years later Duvernay did in fact become publisher of La Minerve, and that newspaper advocated the same.

⁵⁵ Canadian Spectator, 9 April 1823.

⁵⁶ It published, for example, O'Connell's speech "The Catholic of Ireland" in three parts, 20, 27 August and 3 September 1823. And the invasion of Spain by a French army to restore the king's powers and humble the Cortes (parliament) was followed closely by the Spectator during 1823.

⁵⁷ The newspaper first appeared independently on 14 February 1824. While little change was noticeable in the paper itself, its advertisers altered drastically. While most advertisements had previously been in French (seventy-nine out of eight-six from 5 to 19 November 1823 for example), they were after the split mainly in English (sixty out of sixty-three on 24 April and 1 May 1824; forty out of forty-one on 12 March 1825). The same advertisers, such as the fruit tree seller John Donellan, even changed the language of their advertisements!

⁵⁸ Jocelyn Waller to Ludger Duvernay, 24 February 1824: Duvernay Correspondence; PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 00179-00181.

principles as Waller's.⁵⁹ Meanwhile the Canadian Spectator continued on an independent basis.

Waller and the Canadian Spectator, like O'Callaghan and the Vindicator later, were anxious that Lower Canada not fall into the same divisions that had so weakened Ireland, but that the people remain united and vigilant of their rights:

...the History of Ireland is a warning to the country. A small but intolerant and rancorous faction here, as in Ireland, would rule the people, and would deprive them of their language, of their laws, of their customs, by a stratagem it would disenfranchise them; it would excite incurable discontents; it would lacerate the province by rancorous dissensions....It would, but for the House of Assembly--make this province a second Ireland.⁶⁰

Waller was well aware of the dangers of division in Lower Canada, and hoped a group like the Hibernian Benevolent Society would help to unite the people in the cause of reform: "The principles by which it is regulated are generous and liberal, as those of Irish men we hope always will be; and although the founders of it, and the great majority of its members are, of course, Irish, yet we were much gratified at observing, that respectable Canadians, British, and Americans, have at their own friendly desire, been cordially adopted as Irish for the benevolent purposes of this association."⁶¹ In Ireland, moreover, Waller hoped that the Catholic Association, which also included some Protestants,

⁵⁹ MDCB, p. 236.

⁶⁰ Canadian Spectator, 25 June 1824.

⁶¹ Ibid., 21 February 1824.

might achieve much.⁶² And he was pleased during 1825 by the liberation of Greece and many South American states.⁶³ But he was upset that the British Parliament seemed determined "to preserve the orange faction [in Ireland] now in danger of being speedily absorbed by the Union of liberal Protestants and Catholics."⁶⁴ When it subsequently dissolved itself, he was overjoyed "that one great obstacle to concord is thereby removed. This good fortune for the empire has been solely produced by the Catholic Association."⁶⁵

Waller's efforts to unite Irish and Canadiens were certainly bearing some fruit during the later 1820's. La Minerve published in 1827 an editorial favouring Catholic Emancipation in Ireland.⁶⁶ It warned its readers that the consequence of division for the Irish had been disastrous, and that dissension in Canada would produce similar results.⁶⁷ On 30 July of the same year an assembly of Irish electors in the Upper Town of Quebec City endorsed Papineau's policies.⁶⁸ He subsequently thanked the Irish for their support in his address to the electors of the west ward of Montreal:

⁶² Ibid., 29 October 1824.

⁶³ The Greek and South American revolutions were met with great approval in the Canadian Spectator during the second half of 1824 and the first half of 1825.

⁶⁴ Canadian Spectator, 2 April 1825.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 4 May 1825.

⁶⁶ La Minerve, 4 June 1827.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 16 July 1827.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 6 August 1827.

La grand majorité de nos Concitoyens Irlandais ont montré dans cette Election un honorable esprit d'indépendance, d'attachement aux principes Constitutionnels, et une honnêteté et vraie conviction, que le bien être de la masse des habitants de leur patrie adoptive, se combinait intimement avec leur propre bien être.⁶⁹

In some cases Irish ruffians had also been used to intimidate electors who supported the opposing candidate. Thus in St. Eustache it was alleged that Irish and Scots from Argenteuil had surrounded the poll and chased French Canadians away, with the result that only twenty-five of the latter had been able to record their votes.⁷⁰ The use of Irish "thugs" during elections by both the reformers and the Tories would become endemic during the next decades but their opinions were purchased, and are not a fair indication of the community's loyalties.⁷¹ Such behavior was far more relevant when spontaneous, and this factor must not be overlooked.

The Spectator was, in fact, very proud of the rôle played by the Irish electors in Montreal during the elections of 1827 in which Louis-Joseph Papineau, Robert Nelson, Hugues Henry and James Leslie, all reformers, were elected for the city.⁷² Waller was a reformer dedicated to the powers of the Assembly in Lower Canada, including its control of

⁶⁹ Ibid., 23 August 1827.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 6 August 1827.

⁷¹ The terms "reform," "reformer" and "reformist," as well as "popular" or "popular party," all refer to the supporters of a reform of the constitution in Lower Canada. The word "patriote" would come into use during the 1830's. The word "radical" in this thesis refers to the more extreme of the reform party, as opposed to its "moderate" wing which was always more willing to compromise. The terms Tory and Constitutionalist, as well as British or Scottish Party, refer to those who supported the administration. Later the term Loyalist was also used.

⁷² Canadian Spectator, 8 August and 26 September 1827.

the revenue, but he was no wild-eyed radical.⁷³ While, for instance, favoring Catholic emancipation in Ireland (and all of Britain), he was wary of Parliamentary reform: "As for parliamentary reform, we are not very ardent on that subject. Some changes might be made--but it should be very gradually and cautiously done, and limited in the extent. We should hope that if Catholic emancipation were achieved the marquis of Lansdown would not make Parliamentary reform a sine qua non."⁷⁴ Yet the government in Lower Canada saw him as a threat, undoubtedly more because of his championing of the French-Irish alliance which was emerging within the province, than because of his radicalism, and moved to silence him and his newspaper. In December of 1827 he was charged, along with Ludger Duvernay and James Lane who published La Minerve and the Canadian Spectator, with printing a libel against the government.⁷⁵ After what the Spectator considered a legal persecution by the authorities, he was convicted and confined to the Montreal jail. He was unable to bear the strain and died on 2 December 1828, aged about fifty-five.⁷⁶ His passing was mourned by all the reformers in the province, but especially by the Irish among them. Even some of his opponents attended his funeral, which was a public event of some consequence.⁷⁷ The Spectator concluded bravely: "The cause of the wicked may prevail for a day, but that of the bold and upright advocate who throws himself as a shield of defence between a suffering Country and the Tyrant mob who oppresses it, must

⁷³ Ibid., 17 December 1824.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 30 May 1827.

⁷⁵ La Minerve, 19 November 1827, p. 4; the Canadian Spectator, 19 December 1827; 5 April and 13 September 1828.

⁷⁶ MDCB, p. 870; the Canadian Spectator, 3, 6, 10 December 1828.

⁷⁷ Canadian Spectator, 3, 6, 10 December 1828.

live forever in the hearts of a grateful people."⁷⁸

Waller's successor as leader of the Irish reformers was Daniel Tracey, also born in Tipperary County (in May 1795). His father was a wealthy merchant and his mother the daughter of a gentleman of property. He had been educated at Trinity College and the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, and had practiced medicine there for several years before emigrating with his brother and sister to Montreal in 1825, where he continued his medical career.⁷⁹ In all of this he bore a striking resemblance to O'Callaghan, and he also had a passion for politics. He was a member of the Constitutional Committee in 1827-1828 and in a letter to the editor of the Canadian Spectator of 18 January 1828 he exulted that he had forwarded the signatures of 404 Irishmen from the Rivière du Nord and of 912 from Sherrington, Hirschbrook and vicinity to the Secretary of that Committee on a petition demanding the recall of Lord Dalhousie, the governor, and commented: "Ces hommes, par leur efforts, se montrent les courageux défenseurs des lois et des droits de leur patrie adoptive."⁸⁰ At a meeting in Montreal on 7 September of the same year he chaired the founding meeting of the Society of Friends of Ireland in Canada, an association which supported Catholic Emancipation and Daniel O'Connell in Ireland, which was open to people of any religious or political persuasion, and whose fees were a democratically reasonable penny a month, as were those of the Catholic Association in

⁷⁸ Ibid., 3 December 1828.

⁷⁹ La Minerve, 19 July 1832; MDCB, p. 837; Emmet J. Mullally, "Dr. Daniel Tracey, A Pioneer Worker For Responsible Government in Canada," CCHA Report, 1934-35, pp. 36-37.

⁸⁰ Republished in La Minerve, 21 January 1828.

Ireland.⁸¹ Tracey acted as Corresponding Secretary for the Society, which ironically met at the British Coffee House, and often chaired its meetings.⁸² One of Waller's last acts was to join the society.⁸³ And he was eulogized at a gathering of its members shortly after his death.⁸⁴

Just ten days after Waller's death there appeared the first issue of the newspaper destined to replace the Canadian Spectator (which ceased publication on 7 February 1829), to focus Irish reformist opinion for the next decade, and to serve as the pulpit of first Daniel Tracey and then his successor as editor, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan. Its original title was The Irish Vindicator and Canadian General Advertiser, and under the banner in its first issue appeared the following:

The nations have fallen, and thou still are young,
Thy sun is but rising, when others are set:
And, tho' slavery's cloud o'er thy morning hath hung,
The full moon of freedom shall beam round thee yet.⁸⁵

Its lead article was a reprint of O'Connell's address to the people of County Tipperary, where Tracey was born, and in his address to the readers the editor outlined clearly the purpose to which the paper would ever remain true:

The sympathy we entertain for our fellow Countrymen
in Ireland, and the hope we have of being beneficial
not only to them, but to our countrymen, in both the

⁸¹ La Minerve, 2 October 1828.

⁸² Ibid., 9 October 1828.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Vindicator, 12 December 1828; and La Minerve, 18 December 1828.

⁸⁵ Vindicator, 12 December 1828.

Canadas, are powerful inducements to us, to make use of every exertion, in sending forth to the world, a Journal on the integrity of which the people shall place a just and honorable reliance.⁸⁶

Tracey went on to pledge his newspaper to the cause of the common people, and to reject "the opinion that a few individuals, however high in rank or independent in fortune are those to whom most attention should be paid in the exercise of a wise and unbiased government." He then commented that "no man knows better the value of a just government than an Irishman. No man on earth is more ready to pay deferential homage to the chosen and exalted ruler of the people than he. But from a long series of oppression, so it is, that he is ever on the watch lest he should again fall into the miserable condition from which he escaped only by the abandonment of the land of his fathers." Thus it was, Tracey continued, that the Irish had opposed the tyrannical administration of Dalhousie, but supported that of Sir Francis Burton and were now so far favourably disposed to that of Sir James Kempt. On this note the Vindicator, generally of four pages and published twice (sometimes three times) a week, commenced its turbulent career.⁸⁷

Tracey's newspaper aimed at a readership not only of Irishmen, but also of English-speaking liberals, and even some bilingual French Canadians (many of its advertisers were French, and their advertisements often appeared in French).⁸⁸ Nor did it aim only at Montrealers, for it

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ It was published by Tracey and Hagan from December 1828 until May 1829; by Tracey and Company from 15 May until 25 September 1829, and by Tracey himself from 25 September 1829 until 17 July 1832: André Beaulieu and Jean Hamelin, La Presse Québécoise des origines à nos jours, vol. 1: 1764-1859 (Quebec: Université de Laval, 1973), p. 65.

⁸⁸ See appendix F.

had agents in Quebec City, Trois-Rivières, Bytown and such rural areas as Berthier, Beauharnois, St. Hyacinthe, Boucherville, Châteauguay and Chambly, and also in such far-off places as Kingston and York in Upper Canada, and New York and New Orleans in the United States.⁸⁹

The Vindicator cooperated closely with La Minerve: each advertised in the other and each generally supported the same causes.⁹⁰ Thus the French paper appealed to all friends of civil and religious liberty to sign the petition to the British Parliament in favour of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland which was then in the offices of the Vindicator.⁹¹ Both newspapers backed Papineau and his policies, and both favoured O'Connell's program in Ireland. They were, in effect, part of a network of reformist institutions in the province which were linked together by ideology and personal interconnections. This informal grouping included not only newspapers (Le Canadien of Quebec City was another prominent member at the time), but institutions and, of course, individuals. Among the institutions in this network were the previously mentioned Society of Friends of Ireland and the Hibernian Benevolent Society of which Tracey was vice-president in Montreal and O'Callaghan was a leading member in Quebec City.⁹² These societies included members

⁸⁹ Vindicator, 2 January and 3 April 1829.

⁹⁰ On 26 March 1829 the following advertisement appeared in La Minerve: "Le 'Irish Vindicator': Ayant une circulation étendue dans cette Cité, à Québec, et dans les Campagnes des divers Districts du Bas Canada, ainsi que dans les Villes et Villages de la Haute Province, est offert respectueusement au public, comme moyen avantageux d'annonces publiques."

⁹¹ La Minerve, 5 January 1829.

⁹² Vindicator, 3 March 1829 and 30 March 1830. Ironically, while Tracey was vice-president of the society in Montreal, the president was John Donellan, who would run against the patriotes in the 1834 election in the west ward of Montreal.

both French and English-speaking, and both Catholic and Protestant. Taken together, the reform movement in the province was highly reminiscent in its ideals and principles of the early United Irish Societies, and represented a genuine effort to overcome the barriers of language and religion.

The Societies of Friends of Ireland had by 1829 established chapters in the major urban centers in Lower Canada. The Society in Trois-Rivières included many French Canadians; prominent members at its formation in January of 1829 included thirteen French Canadians, three Englishmen and two Irishmen.⁹³ The Montreal chapter was very heavily dominated by Irishmen, including Tracey, but also included as members Jacques Viger and Pierre-Dominique Debartzch.⁹⁴ In Bytown (Ottawa) the society was headed for years by Daniel O'Connor, and was very active in the cause. Its membership there was mainly Irish.⁹⁵ And in Quebec City the society was also dominated by Irish members like its secretary

⁹³ La Minerve, 29 January 1829. They were René-Joseph Kimber, president, Antoine Poulain de Courval, vice-president, Jean Défosses, treasurer, and Charles Mondelet and Edouard Barnard, secretaries, Pierre Défosses, John Harkin, Louis Carrier, Etienne Parent, Joseph Parent, Louis Byrne, George N. Turner, Joseph Montrivil, Joseph Gervais, Antoine Zephins Leblanc, Etienne Tapus, Olivier Coulombe and Péter Scannon. On petitions from the citizens of Trois-Rivières calling for the emancipation of Catholics in Ireland were the signatures of 113 French Canadians, six English, two Irish and one other: Kimber Correspondence, PAC, MG24-B28, pp. 1-13.

⁹⁴ La Minerve, 2 October 1828, 6 October 1828, and 9 October 1828. Of ninety-five members listed in the Vindicator on 17 February 1829, seventy-eight were Irish (many names even include their county of origin), seven had English or Scottish names, and ten were of uncertain origin.

⁹⁵ See the Ledger for 1829 in the Daniel O'Connor Correspondence, PAC, MG24-I107. When a celebration of St. Patrick's day was held in the city in 1829, toasts were made to such diversities as the King, the Duke of Wellington, the British Army and Navy, and Daniel O'Connell and the Catholic Association: Vindicator, 7 April 1829.

O'Callaghan, but contained a goodly number of French Canadians.⁹⁶

These societies provided an excellent opportunity for cooperation among the various ethnic communities in the province, as well as a forum for the expression of Irish patriotism. Many French Canadians were deeply attached to the cause of Catholic Emancipation, and many kept engravings of the Liberator's visage in their homes.⁹⁷ The potential which the movement provided for Irish-French cooperation was not lost on Tracey, who wrote a member of the society in Trois-Rivières:

I beg leave to return you and your Society the warmest thanks for your kind interference in the affairs of an unfortunate country. The...report in Ireland of Societies being formed in this country will have great effect on the Catholic cause. This you may easily infer from the anxiety the ministry of England have at all times to keep you in good temper; if they think that Catholic Canada should do any thing she could & indeed ought for Catholic Ireland, much benefit is likely to accrue.⁹⁸

The Hibernian Benevolent Society in Montreal was more exclusively Irish, all its officers in 1829 being of that nationality, as was the subsequently established Irish Literary Association.⁹⁹ Tracey was active in all of these societies, and also in the Society for Emigrants. O'Callaghan was also active in the latter, and he established with Dr. Lyons an apothecary at his house in Quebec's Lower Town which was

⁹⁶ William M. Nolte, "The Irish in Canada, 1815-1867" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1975), p. 187.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Daniel Tracey to R.J. Kimber, 30 January 1829, Kimber Correspondence, PAC, MG24-B28, pp. 16-18.

⁹⁹ Vindicator, 3 March 1829 and 11 March 1831.

open six days a week to serve destitute immigrants.¹⁰⁰ It was the arrival of increasingly large numbers of poor immigrants which increased the strain on Irish-French relations within the province, and also put men like Tracey and O'Callaghan into a quandary. Certainly they could not turn their backs on their fellow countrymen, especially as they were themselves part of the same migration, but they were resentful of the British government's callousness in allowing this tide of human misery to be swept unaided onto the shores of a world which might need their strong backs but could not yet fill their empty stomachs, and they were sensitive to the justified fears of their Canadien friends at the prospect of engulfment. Thus Tracey editorialized on 27 August 1830:

"Paupers sent out by public authority have been going from house to house, both in town and country, asking assistance, and although the habitual charity of the people of this country, who voluntarily support their own poor, may have afforded them some relief, it cannot be of long duration."¹⁰¹

The Emigrant Society was nonetheless another example of an effort at coexistence among the various communities. In Montreal three doctors formed a dispensary to help poor immigrants: their names were Stephenson, Demers and Valler. At the same time a Montreal Committee to aid the emigrants was officered by two Irishmen.¹⁰² In Quebec City, meanwhile, besides the doctors working at the hospital and quarantine station recently established at Grosse Isle, O'Callaghan was working with two other doctors at a clinic at Près de Ville, while two others

¹⁰⁰ La Minerve, 29 August 1831.

¹⁰¹ Vindicator, 27 May 1830.

¹⁰² Ibid., 17 June and 1 July 1831.

offered their services at the Emigrant Hospital.¹⁰³

But the cholera and other diseases which accompanied the arrivals in 1831 and especially in the next year seriously undermined the enthusiasm of many French Canadians for these Irish masses suddenly sweeping down upon them like the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Thus La Minerve reported in 1831 that the arrival of an extraordinary number of emigrants, most of them Irish, had led to a rise in the price of provisions, and fears for public health, since some of the new arrivals, unable to find refuge in any of the hospitals, were "étendus sur le pavé, près du bureau de la poste, dans un état pitoyable."¹⁰⁴ Father McMahon and O'Callaghan had had to seek shelter for these unfortunates. An Emigrant Society was established, the purpose of which was to aid poor immigrants by giving them two days' provisions, a passage to Montreal from Quebec, and, if necessary, help in travelling on. At the same time, the Friends of Ireland were helping immigrants to acquire land in Lower Canada.¹⁰⁵

Yet O'Callaghan apparently had a subsequent change of heart. Late in the year he wrote to Father McMahon, and his views were transmitted to the emigration agent, A.C. Buchanan:

As For Emigrant Societies, I consider them more harm than good. Let every man coming to the country be thrown on his own exertions and on his own resources; and he will eventually succeed much better than he can do when he is in expectations from charitable institutions or individuals. He will look for work and get it, but no man will exert

¹⁰³ O'Gallagher, Grosse Isle, p. 36.

¹⁰⁴ La Minerve, 6 June 1831.

¹⁰⁵ Vindicator, 17 June 1831.

himself as long as he can get others to think and look for him.¹⁰⁶

Ironically, it would be very similar laissez-faire policies that would help to doom O'Callaghan's beloved homeland fifteen years later. One can only speculate as to the degree to which his emerging attitude was conditioned by political, rather than humanitarian, considerations. For the Irish-French alliance, the cornerstone of Waller's and Tracey's political strategy, which O'Callaghan would soon adopt, was put under severe strain by the demands of the sick and starving Irishmen who followed the more self-sufficient medical student to the shores of a land of promise.

Tracey founded the Vindicator at a time when stirring events were taking place in the world. The struggle for the emancipation of Catholics in Ireland (and the rest of Great Britain) was reaching its climax, and it seemed quite possible that a union of liberal Catholics and Protestants, led by Daniel O'Connell, would soon re-establish Ireland as an autonomous state.¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, when the emancipation bill was finally introduced into the British Parliament by the Duke of Wellington and Robert Peel in April 1829, it was tied to another which would raise the qualification for voting to £10, thus disenfranchising the 40s. freeholders. The Vindicator commented that this "sophistical contrivance" would:

...keep the people of that country in the same state as they are at present. While it opens the House of Commons to them, it takes away the means by which they might obtain admission; so that the inability

¹⁰⁶ O'Callaghan to Father Patrick McMahon, 21 December 1831, Sessional Papers, 1833, p. 19 and PAC MG11-Q206, pt. 1. McMahon sent this letter on to Buchanan saying he largely agreed with its views.

¹⁰⁷ See the Vindicator, 7 April 1829.

to become members will remain, while the odium of exclusion, the cunning ministry think will be removed. If the qualification to vote be raised to £10, it were better for the Roman Catholics to remain as they are, sensible that the British cabinet will do all in their power to conciliate them, as was done at the commencement of the French war.¹⁰⁸

The Vindicator argued that the bill would falsely appease many Catholics, and would thus allow the British government to intervene in the Russo-Turkish war then being waged: this, in fact, it saw as the motive for the emancipation bill.¹⁰⁹

Tracey, however, could not maintain his cynicism: by May he was praising the work of the Catholic Association (which was disbanding) and lauding the emancipation bill in fullsome terms as an "act of justice to the people of Ireland and the concession of those rights which ignorance and inequity kept back so long."¹¹⁰ The Vindicator even went so far, despite the disenfranchisement of the 40s. freeholders which it had earlier argued made emancipation worse than useless, as to call the Duke of Wellington "a true and sterling benefactor" of the Irish people.¹¹¹ By June, when a handful of Catholics took their seats in the House of Lords, the Vindicator was ecstatic at "this glorious consummation of the labours of the most talented and virtuous men of England and Ireland."¹¹² Only O'Connell's subsequent inability to take his seat in the British House of Commons dimmed the glory of the achievement until his re-election.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 24 April 1829. This theme was reiterated on 28 April.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 21 and 24 April 1829.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 5 and 15 May 1829.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 15 May 1829.

¹¹² Ibid., 12 June 1829.

¹¹³ Ibid., 19, 30 June, 14 July, 18 September 1829.

The resolution of the Catholic question in Ireland provided Tracey with an excuse for a profound alteration of his newspaper. He prepared his readers on 7 July with an editorial which stated: "When we commenced our journal we own our feelings were far different from what we are bound to say, they are at present; we were then only Irishmen--we are now Britons."¹¹⁴ Exactly three weeks later the Irish Vindicator became simply the Vindicator, an alteration which Tracey explained succinctly:

Since the decision of the Catholic question... the title of our Journal has been a matter of objection to many, and by more have we been urged to lay aside that mark of distinction, which circumstances and the era of our commencement required....In compliance with sentiments by which we would always feel anxious to be guided, and sensible that the same opinions, supporting the interests and rights of the people can be as well, if not better, maintained under an appellation which will apply to all indiscriminately in the Province, we have thought it advisable not to persist in our nationality, however pleased with it ourselves.¹¹⁵

It seems evident from this that at least some reformers feared that the "Irish" sobriquet might make Tracey's newspaper seem too ethnic, and hurt its ability to reach all the English-speaking segment of the population. Yet under both Tracey and O'Callaghan, the Irish element in the newspaper's content remained evident.

With the achievement of Catholic emancipation in Ireland, the Societies of Friends of Ireland in the Canadas were dissolved, as their ostensible purpose no longer existed. They had provided an excellent forum for the strengthening of the alliance of all reform-minded people

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 7 July 1829.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 28 July 1829.

in Lower Canada, whatever their ethnic origin, and especially of the union of French and Irish so dear to the hearts of Waller, Tracey and O'Callaghan. But that idea certainly did not die with them.¹¹⁶

The change of name altered nothing in the outlook of the Vindicator. Tracey denounced the Orangemen late in August for starting a civil war in Ireland.¹¹⁷ But by the spring of 1830 he felt that England was so in need of parliamentary reform that it was worse off than Ireland.¹¹⁸ Other foreign and domestic matters were also, of course, accorded attention: Tracey criticized the bakers' monopoly which was driving up the cost of bread in Montreal,¹¹⁹ and was horrified by "the most beastly intoxication" which was apparently littering the streets of Montreal with derelicts.¹²⁰ But O'Connell and Ireland soon rose to the fore again, as the issue of the repeal of the Union began to gain momentum.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Finnegan, p. 38, argues that "the dissolution of the societies appears to mark the end of any formal partnership between Irish and French Canadians until the 1832 by-election in Montreal West." There seems, however, no reason to believe that this had any appreciable effect on their political allegiance.

¹¹⁷ Vindicator, 28 August 1829.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 13 April 1830.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11 August 1829.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 11 May 1830.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 7 September 1830. In the summer of 1830, Eliza Waller wrote to the Vindicator to denounce the government for failing to recognize Jocelyn Waller's contribution to the province "as the chief of the large Irish population here 'who' saved the province to England by exposing the misrule of hirelings here--who came to strut their hour and carry off what they could." She argued that he had shown the French Canadians that their problem was not the British constitution, but those who were administering it and that both the people and the government were therefore indebted to him. Waller had done his best, and "the Canadian people have good cause to regret his death, and will long, I trust, remember that he lost his life in their defence." *Ibid.*, 30 July 1830.

Local politics, and even repeal in Ireland, were overshadowed in the fall of 1830 by events in Europe which thrilled Tracey to the bone: revolution had broken out once again in France. Tracey could not contain his enthusiasm as the first reports reached Montreal early in September. He editorialized ecstatically: "There can be no example, in any age, similar or so splendid, to show how the people should act when attempted to be trodden down by the accursed tyranny of men, who seem to think nations born for their pleasure and to lick the dust beneath their feet."¹²² Tracey hoped that England would learn from this that it was hopeless to try to force unpopular kings on foreign nations.

During the next months the columns of the Vindicator were filled with stories and editorials about the exciting events taking place across the Atlantic. As the popular movement in Europe spread to the Netherlands, to Germany, to Spain and to Switzerland, Tracey's enthusiasm, and undoubtedly that of many other reformers, knew no bounds. In November he announced that:

Europe seems likely to make one general clearing out of the Royal beasts that infested it; cleansing the Augean stables of the offensive accumulation of despotism; unnatural and absurd governments; aristocratical profligacy and profuseness; and of those impious doctrines which would persuade us that some of the greatest fools on earth...were the immediate emanations from God and appointed by divine favour to regulate our concerns.¹²³

While foreign issues allowed Tracey to vent his fury, on local issues he was not always as radical. Late in the year the Vindicator defended the collection of tithes in Canada, and criticized an article in the

¹²² Ibid., 10 September 1830.

¹²³ Ibid., 9 November 1830.

Canadian Courant which called for their abolition, stressing that they could not be compared to those unjust tithes which the Irish peasantry was forced to pay to an alien, Protestant clergy.¹²⁴

Early in 1831 Daniel O'Connell introduced the issue of the repeal of the Union into the British Parliament, and the Vindicator was hopeful of his success.¹²⁵ Occurrences of rural violence, long prevalent in Ireland, which took place in England around this time, gave Tracey an opportunity to comment on the impending hangings, imprisonments and transportations, and on what they boded for the future:

The people are first driven mad by bad laws, oppressive taxation, want and every species of misery-- They are then decimated to quiet them. Ireland, occupied with the agitation of the anti-Union question, tho [sic] not affording the same opportunity for legitimate executions, her leaders being made cunning by experience, presents far more difficulties to her rulers. Every thing is done within the law, for which it would be rather daring to make examples on the gallows.¹²⁶

Tracey believed that the battle between the upholders of aristocracy and those of democracy would soon reach its climax: "In Ireland the separation of these parties is being most marked. There can scarcely

¹²⁴ Ibid., 7 December 1830. The Vindicator was also disturbed about the treatment of Ezekiel Hart of Trois-Rivières who claimed that he had been denied a magistracy because he was Jewish. Tracey felt certain that an appeal to the Assembly would rectify the injustice--at least he hoped so. His confidence seems ironic, since the majority in the Assembly had, in 1807, used British precedent to try twice to deny Hart, a member of the "English" party, his seat in the House, and it had been the governor who had defended his right: *ibid.*, 23 October 1830 and Ouellet, pp. 26, 91.

¹²⁵ Vindicator, 7 January 1831.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 14 January 1831.

exist a doubt, but these troublesome events will terminate in revolution."¹²⁷

O'Callaghan, meanwhile, was busy in Quebec City. As well as practicing medicine, he was deeply involved with the building of St. Patrick's Church, and was active in the Friends of Ireland and the Hibernian Benevolent Society (he was chairman of their St. Patrick's Day celebration in 1830).¹²⁸ He was also the secretary of the Mechanics' Institute, in which capacity he addressed an appeal for new members early in 1831, calling mechanics "amongst the greatest benefactors to society," who could nonetheless gain from the Institute, at a cost of only "four coppers" a week, "the inestimable blessing of knowledge."¹²⁹ O'Callaghan was clearly emerging as a leader of the Quebec Irish and was closely associated with such other leading Irishmen of the city as Michael Connolly, John Teed and Michael Quigley.¹³⁰ He could not foresee that in the near future he would be called away to replace Tracey in Montreal.

The revolution which broke out in Poland during the first days of 1831 greatly excited the reformers, including Tracey, and helped refuel the fires of enthusiasm which the revolutions of 1830 had first ignited.¹³¹ It is certainly not coincidental that the reformers of Lower

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 30 March 1830.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 28 January 1831.

¹³⁰ O'Gallagher, Saint Patrick's, pp. 50-54. Quigley was a master mason and plasterer, Teed a prosperous tailor, and Connolly a wholesale and retail merchant. All were very active in reform politics, and Teed and Connolly were arrested and held in prison from November 1838 until June 1839.

¹³¹ Vindicator, 8 February 1831.

Canada became more radical in their demands during this period, since events in Ireland, England and many other parts of Europe seemed to indicate that liberal change, or where that was denied, revolution, were sweeping the western world. By 1832 economic setbacks and an increase in immigration would add concrete bastions to the growing edifice of patriote ideology, and Papineau would prepare to raise the stakes in play.¹³² He was gambling that his bluff would not be called for he was not intending a revolution. Papineau's aims were political, and he had no desire to fundamentally alter the social order. He had, moreover, a great deal to lose: he possessed both wealth and power, and violence by the people does not always succeed, nor is it always controllable. The Rebellion of 1798 in Ireland had gotten out of hand and ended in disaster, and the Polish insurrection was crushed by foreign troops.¹³³

Peaceful means, however, could not guarantee success either. Not only did O'Connell's efforts to get the Union repealed by the British Parliament fail, but he was arrested for seditious practices in Ireland. He eventually pleaded guilty to fourteen charges, and was released.¹³⁴ The Vindicator considered this a victory, but Ireland was no closer to independence, and the level of frustration and violence increased: on 1 July the Vindicator proclaimed that "Ireland is all but in a state of open and avowed insurrection."¹³⁵ Later in the summer it reported the massacre by troops and yeomanry of a crowd protesting some

¹³² Ouellet, pp. 216-226.

¹³³ See the Vindicator, 8 November 1831.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 8 March and 12 April 1831.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 1 July 1831.

evictions for the non-payment of tithes at Newtownbarry. "How long," the Vindicator asked, "will such atrocities be tolerated in a country calling itself intelligent and civilized."¹³⁶ But in Ireland, as in Canada, the peasants and the poor wanted social rather than political reform, while the "liberal" politicians hoped to use their discontent to force the government to grant concessions in the political realm. The common people had little chance of winning in this game.

The Vindicator remained hopeful that O'Connell would succeed in his efforts to repeal the Union, and published an address from the Society of Friends of Ireland in Montréal (signed by Tracey and two other members) which described the political and economic disadvantages to Ireland of its attachment to England, and called on Canadians to "continue to make common cause with your Irish brethren."¹³⁷ Many of the Friends of Ireland were also active at this time in gathering donations for the emigrant fund, and a good deal of money was subscribed, most of it by English and Scottish donors.¹³⁸

The more radical stance of the reformers became evident in the spring of 1831 when the Committee of Grievances appointed by the Assembly reported what the Vindicator termed "a frightful catalogue of

¹³⁶ Ibid., 9 August 1831.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 5 April 1831.

¹³⁸ The donors were listed in the Vindicator on 21, 24, 26 June and 5 July. They included seventeen people with Irish names, thirty-four with French names, 159 with English or Scottish names, and fourteen whose names were indeterminate. The collectors listed on 24 June included three with Irish names, three French, five English or Scottish, and one indeterminate.

crimes" committed by previous administrations which included the hounding to death of Waller, whose "legitimate successor" Tracey termed himself.¹³⁹ For Tracey, like Waller before him and O'Callaghan after, saw himself as a leader not only of the Irish, but of all the reformers, whatever their language or religion. The threat posed by a common front of Irish and French Canadians was becoming increasingly evident to the government, which determined to take action. The authorities were understandably concerned that the revolutionary current which had been sweeping through Europe might soon have repercussions in Canada, if the growing enthusiasm of the patriotes and their press was left unchecked. Early in 1832, therefore, the government moved against Tracey and Duvernay of La Minerve, as it had previously done against the latter and Waller. In January they were arrested and charged with libel for calling the Legislative Council "a nuisance."¹⁴⁰ La Minerve commented: "En disant que le Conseil était une nuisance publique, un incubé oppressif, les écrivains de la Minerve et du Vindicator n'ont dit autre chose que ce que la presse libérale, la représentation et le pays entier ont dit cent et mille fois."¹⁴¹ Tracey faced the accusation with a show of complete indifference, but both men were imprisoned to await trial.¹⁴² The reform party reacted swiftly to this attack upon its liberties, and a meeting of about 600 persons was held, attended by Louis-Hippolyte

¹³⁹ Vindicator, 25 March 1831.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Storrow Brown, Brief Sketch of the Life and Times of the Late Hon. Louis Joseph Papineau (a pamphlet which was originally published in the Dominion Monthly, January 1872), p. 8. Available at McGill University, McLennan Library, Rare Book Room.

¹⁴¹ La Minerve, 23 January 1832.

¹⁴² Ibid.

LaFontaine, Robert Nelson, Edouard-Raymond Fabre, and other radical leaders, to protest the government's action. About half of the assembled crowd proceeded to march past and salute the offices of the Vindicator, the homes of Denis-Benjamin Viger, Dr. Nelson, Louis-Joseph Papineau, LaFontaine and other sites, cheering all the while for their persecuted brethren. The Tory press, led by such newspapers as the Mercury, naturally denounced this "mob" scene.¹⁴³

In the end Tracey and Duvernay spent forty days in prison and were released at the beginning of March.¹⁴⁴ Their journey from Berthier to Montreal was a triumphal procession, which culminated in their entry into the city accompanied by 200-300 carioles (carriages), a number of horsemen, countless banners and a band. They proceeded to Duvernay's house and eventually dispersed, despite the provocative presence of armed men in the New Market. The Vindicator editorialized:

In the entire of this triumphant victory gained by the Press of Lower Canada over its enemies and those of the People, we are happy to observe that not the least symptom of commotion or disorder prevailed....The alarmists, have, indeed, been sadly disappointed in, we presume, not having had the satisfaction of shooting a few dozens of the people, according to the gallant preparations made for that gallant purpose.¹⁴⁵

An equally peaceful meeting was held a few days later at the Nelson

¹⁴³ Ibid., 26 January 1832.

¹⁴⁴ Vindicator, 2 March 1832. Mullally, pp. 40, 44 argues strongly that they were imprisoned for only 35 days.

¹⁴⁵ Vindicator, 2 March 1832.

Hotel to celebrate the event.¹⁴⁶

At liberty once again, Tracey resumed his activities with renewed vigour. In an editorial he heartily approved of the resolutions of a meeting of Canadien businessmen which denounced the passing of the province's external trade to British merchants, the lack of education and employment for youth, and which voted the formation of the Canadian Commercial Establishment at Montreal.¹⁴⁷ A month later he denounced the British American Land Company as "This Company of Speculators formed in London for the purpose of jobbing on the lands and Property of the People of Lower Canada."¹⁴⁸ Thus Tracey's views on Lower Canada, like those of O'Callaghan, were becoming increasingly "nationalist" and radical by 1832. He wished to see the province assert its economic and political autonomy within the imperial system, a desire akin to his hopes for Ireland. To that end, therefore, he decided to extend his domain from journalism into the field of direct political involvement. O'Callaghan would later emulate his choice.

Naturally, the "nationalism" of such Irish patriotes was always problematic--it originated in Ireland, and it was to the Irish nation that they obviously belonged by birth, by temperament and by culture. Thus, despite their genuine empathy for the desires of many French Canadians for a greater degree of self-government for nationalistic reasons, to Tracey and O'Callaghan greater autonomy was primarily a

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 6 March 1832.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 16 March 1832.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 10 April 1832. His editorial called it "Canada Land Company," but it was undoubtedly the British American Land Company to which he was referring.

matter of liberal democratic reform, and of distancing Lower Canada from the hated British aristocracy.¹⁴⁹ For Papineau and many of his French-speaking followers, however, the issue was not always so clear.

Papineau himself insisted that he was fundamentally a liberal, that his nationalism was at best secondary, but many remained unconvinced and believed that he could have made do very well with a French-Canadian state ruled by a French-Canadian aristocracy-bourgeoisie--with himself as benevolent monarch, or more appropriately First Citizen. His social origins, his very bearing, made some suspect that his liberal pronouncements concealed a Napoleonic vision of self-aggrandizement and national glory. Perhaps he did not really know himself, but simply reflected the contradictions within the patriote movement.¹⁵⁰

Tracey was inspired to enter active politics in 1832 not only by his dedication to the cause of reform, but also by his concern over the spread of Orangeism in the province. He was distressed by the anti-Catholic propaganda being trumpeted by the Orange Lodge established in

¹⁴⁹ It should be noted as well that they seem never to have shared the anti-clericalism of some French-Canadian patriotes to any great extent, despite their political differences with most of the clergy.

¹⁵⁰ See Fernand Ouellet, ed., Papineau: textes choisis et présentés (Quebec: Presses universitaires Laval, 1959; reprint ed. 1970), pp. 9-10; Denis Monière, Le Développement des idéologies au Québec (Montreal - Editions Québec/Amerique, 1977), pp. 134-39. His public stance was unequivocal; for example, in February of 1831 he stated: "It is therefore not in the mother country, nor in the rest of Europe, where social organization is entirely different, where the sharing of wealth is very unequal, that we should seek examples; it is rather in America where one sees neither colossal wealth nor degrading poverty, where a man of genius has the run of different social ranks without obstacle": cited by Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 217. Ouellet sees this as no more than rhetoric, but offers only Papineau's wealth as evidence. It is, as such, a case, however strong, built on circumstantial evidence.

Montreal and headed by George P. Bull, the owner of the London and Canada Record in that city.¹⁵¹ Orangeism, an amalgam of societies dedicated to the maintenance of Protestant rule in Britain and Ireland, and anxious always to commemorate William of Orange's defeat of the Catholic James II at the Battle of the Boyne on 12 July 1690, had spread to Canada during the 1820's. It first appeared among the garrisons of towns like Montreal and Quebec, as well as York and Kingston. In 1830 the Grand Lodge of British North America was established, and, while it took much firmer root in Upper than in Lower Canada, Tracey obviously feared its further spread in both provinces.¹⁵² He was also wary of the proposed formation in London of a Company for Lower Canadian Lands which he suspected would encourage the emigration of Orangemen into the province.¹⁵³ Le Canadien of Quebec commented succinctly that the object of this society was certainly to recruit enemies of the Canadiens, and that at one of its meetings a member had suggested that immigration from only England and Scotland should be encouraged, because "les Irlandais feraient cause commune avec les Canadiens."¹⁵⁴ Le Canadien, at least, obviously feared that the British were well aware of the dangers of French Canadian-Irish cooperation.

There was, moreover, even an attempt being made in Upper Canada

¹⁵¹ La Minerve, 9 April 1832, and 12 April 1832.

¹⁵² Hereward Senior, Orangeism: The Canadian Phase (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972), pp. 7-12.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Le Canadien, 11 April 1832: reprinted in La Minerve, 16 April 1832.

to form what seems, at least at first sight, a rather improbable alliance of Orangemen and Irish Catholics on the basis of their common heritage, immigrant status, social conservatism and political reformism. Any chance, however remote, of such an alliance was doomed during the 1830's by William Lyon Mackenzie's quixotic radicalism and the Orangemen sided with the Tories.¹⁵⁵ In fact, though, any Orange radical sentiments were very ephemeral, and, while Orangemen and conservative Roman Catholics would undoubtedly agree on certain issues, they were intrinsically incapable of any close cooperation, except on specific issues.

Early in the spring of 1832 John Fisher resigned, due to ill health, as the representative of Montreal West in the Legislative Assembly. This presented the editor of the Vindicator with a tempting opportunity to enlarge his field of activity and enhance his influence.¹⁵⁶ As early as 12 April La Minerve proposed Tracey for the vacancy, noting that he was a supporter of the people and a man of spotless reputation.¹⁵⁷ A week later the editor of the Vindicator, spurred by his hopes and fears for the future of Lower Canada, declared his candidacy and issued his address "To the Free and Independent Electors of the West-Ward of the City of Montreal." Explicitly donning the mantle of Jocelyn Waller's successor, and recalling their cooperation in opposition to Lord Dalhousie in 1827, he made his position clear:

¹⁵⁵ Senior, Orangeism: The Canadian Phase, pp. 13-39.

¹⁵⁶ France Galarneau, "L'Election dans le Quartier-Ouest de Montréal en 1832" (M.A. Thesis, University of Montreal, 1978), p. 8.

¹⁵⁷ La Minerve, 12 April 1832.

The state of affairs in Lower Canada, but recently enabled to assume any position of that influence a free country ought to possess, requires on the part of the Inhabitants the utmost watchfulness and care....The duty of every Legislator should be, by wholesome laws, to ELEVATE THE PEOPLE--SECURE TO THEM THEIR LIBERTIES--SEE THEM PROTECTED AGAINST OPPRESSION.¹⁵⁸

He went on to state his strong objections to a permanent civil list and the British American Land Company and his support of an elected Legislative Council. He concluded: "Legislation should, by right, be for the benefit of the people and their interests, as being the majority, & not be confined to any particular classes, which may arrogate to themselves unwarranted distinctions."¹⁵⁹ Among his slogans was "L'Union fait la Force," and he hoped to win with Irish and French-Canadian votes.¹⁶⁰

His opponent was Stanley Bagg, who stressed his pursuit of business in the city for the past quarter century, thus emphasizing Tracey's more recent arrival, and promised "to promote its prosperity, to advocate the cause of education, the improvement of commerce, the extension of internal communications, the protection of religion and the liberty of conscience; and to defend your rights and privileges."¹⁶¹ Despite these rather "liberal" pronouncements, Bagg was the candidate of business and of the government and its Tory supporters. In fact, Bagg was seen as such a reactionary that the patriote Amury Girod believed it

¹⁵⁸ Vindicator, 20 April 1832. It had been published in French in La Minerve as an "Extra" on 19 April.

¹⁵⁹ Vindicator, 20 April 1832.

¹⁶⁰ Galarneau, p. 24.

¹⁶¹ Vindicator, 20 April 1832.

was his candidacy that allowed the reformers to run Tracey:

Tracey was undoubtedly a man as violent as he was gifted and talented;...without the opposition of a man such as Bagg, a citizen of the United-States, affiliated with all that is opposed to the interests of the majority of the people, I do not believe that the strongest adversaries of the bureaucracy could think of sending him to parliament.¹⁶²

Fernand Ouellet thus sees the candidacy of Tracey as "expedient," but there is no other evidence that Tracey was in any way viewed as an extremist.¹⁶³ Certainly the Vindicator was often shrill, but so were many of the patriotes--including Papineau himself. Tracey was chosen to run because it was believed he could appeal to both French-Canadian and Irish voters in the riding, and he would undoubtedly have been chosen to run against any candidate put up by the bureaucrates.

The election turned into a classic confrontation. Polling at the time was public, and voting ended only when no elector had pronounced himself for one hour while the poll was open.¹⁶⁴ Violence around the polling place was, not surprisingly under the circumstances, a common occurrence, and this by-election proved to be exceptionally so. A number of encounters took place during the polling, with ruffians on both sides trying to intimidate the electors and their opponents, and

¹⁶² Cited by Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 226.

¹⁶³ Ibid. Traditionally one of the Montreal west ward seats was held by someone representing the non-French population, thus eliminating any French-Canadian candidates.

¹⁶⁴ Galarneau, pp. 28-29. Any Canadian or British subject twenty-one years of age or older who met the property qualification could vote--male or female.

these finally culminated in a bloody riot.¹⁶⁵ Three French-Canadian supporters of the reform cause were killed when the crowd was fired upon by British troops.¹⁶⁶ The Vindicator had criticized the Tories' tactics of intimidation throughout the election, and editorialized after the riot:

During the entire of this procrastinated election, there has been nothing left undone by the Bureau-crats of this city to carry their intentions into effect.--Proceeding from bad to worse--from assaults of the hired bullies down to yesterday's military murders: from attacks on the most quiet and peaceable citizen, night and day, to the attempts made at private assassination.¹⁶⁷

It further commented that "The Montreal Gazette...says we stigmatized the Partisans of Mr. Bagg as a band of Murderers. We would be glad to know by what other name they are to be called after the perpetration of

¹⁶⁵ Galarneau has counted seven incidents (before the riot of 21 May) which produced numerous injuries, most of them to Tracey supporters. But the reformers were by no means always pacific: she notes that during some early polling French and Irish voters who failed to vote for Tracey were booed or even beaten as they left the poll. Galarneau, pp. 34, 99.

¹⁶⁶ Vindicator, 22 May 1832. The three dead were Casimir Chauvin, a printer, François Languedoc and Pierre Billet.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. La Minerve stated succinctly: "Le parti national l'a emporté sur la faction anti-canadienne. Malgré la conduite faible et partielle de l'officier rapporteur, malgré la violence, les menaces, la corruption, le parjure contre lesquels M. Tracey a en à lutter, malgré la force militaire envoyée contre lui, malgré le massacre des trois canadiens, malgré les canons braqués en face du lieu du poll, le tout à la demande des partisans de l'autre candidat, M. Tracey a été élu le vingt-troisième jour du poll." La Minerve, 24 May 1832.

the foul and horrible murders committed yesterday evening by the military, at their instigation."¹⁶⁸

The events which precipitated the outrage of the reform faction were bloody indeed, and the Vindicator headlined its account of them "HORRIBLE MASSACRE". The paper reported that after the close of the poll on 21 May, Tracey's party was proceeding down St. James Street when the magistrates, without any sufficient provocation, called out the military who, aided by some Bagg supporters, attacked the dispersing mob, killing three and severely wounding at least two others.¹⁶⁹ The Legislative Assembly held an enquiry into these events two years later, and the evidence given generally supported the reformers' contention that the attack was unwarranted. One witness, John Jordan, stated that there had been a disturbance at the poll during the afternoon of that day which had resulted in the calling of troops to the scene by John Fisher, a magistrate and a former member of the Assembly. The soldiers restored order and were then placed within the enclosure of a nearby church. Later in the afternoon two other magistrates requested that the Returning-Officer adjourn the poll, but he refused.

As Tracey was leaving the poll, according to Jordan, one of his supporters was struck down by one of the Special Constables. A riot ensued, with the reformers pelting the Constables and the Tories present with stones. Troops intervened, and fired into the crowd. Among

¹⁶⁸ Vindicator, 22 May 1832.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

those throwing stones at the reformers was the eminent John Fisher!¹⁷⁰ Another witness reported that Louis-Tancrede Bouthillier had requested him on the fatal day to use his influence to prevent the Irish from coming to the poll, but he had refused, although he agreed to ask Peter Dunn and John Turney to do so, as a disturbance was expected and the military were to be in the Champs de Mars in readiness.¹⁷¹ It is also of interest that he denied that he had talked to O'Callaghan in Trois-Rivières or Quebec City about a letter from Mr. Gates warning the latter not to appear at the poll on 21 May.¹⁷² In all of this, there was no denying the use of hired ruffians, called Bullies, by Bagg, nor the partiality of many of the magistrates.¹⁷³ It may, considering the

¹⁷⁰ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1834, Appendix (after "N"): "Proceedings and Minutes of Evidence taken before a Committee of the Whole House, appointed to examine evidence into the events connected with, and which led to the interference of an armed military force at the late election of a representative for the west ward of Montreal," 29 January 1834. Jordan's account seems fairly accurate. A witness named Carlisle Buchanan who gave a conflicting statement and who believed "the troops were in danger before they fired" was later convicted of perjury: Vindicator, 25 December 1832. It is macabre to note that Dr. Beaubien testified that there were rumours at the time that one of those killed had been taken into Dr. Robertson's house and dissected: Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1834, Appendix (after "N"), 7, 10, 12, 14, 17 and 19 January.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.: Evidence of Dennis Murray, merchant of Montreal, 3 March. The evidence of Bouthillier raised another interesting point: on 19 May he had proposed to the Returning Officer that the election be declared a draw as he believed the supporters of both parties were tired of the fray (ibid., 21, 24, 26 February). It should be noted that the vote total as of that date was tied at 680: La Minerve, 21 May 1832.

¹⁷² Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1834, Appendix (after "N"), 3 March.

¹⁷³ Patrick Brennan, a tavern-keeper of Montreal and Tracey supporter, testified that William Collins, William Flinn and Montferrant were hired as Bullies at 10s. a day: ibid., 20, 22, 24 January. And François Beauchamp, a joiner of Montreal, attested that he had been paid \$9 by Bagg to intimidate Tracey supporters, and that there were others hired for the same purpose: ibid., 27 January.

degree of violence apparently contemplated by some, have been fortuitous that there were only three fatalities, and that Tracey himself was not assaulted, a fate later to befall O'Callaghan.¹⁷⁴

Tracey had fallen behind when the poll opened on 25 April, but his supporters had chased Bagg's paid bullies from the polling place the next day and the reform candidate had managed by 1 May to build a majority of 89.¹⁷⁵ This was subsequently eroded little by little, with the result that he managed in the end to eke out a victory by only four votes when the election finally ended on 22 May.¹⁷⁶ Tracey's victory was very definitely an indication of the success of the Irish-French alliance in the province, or at least in Montreal, at this time. He had garnered 84.3 percent of the ballots cast by French Canadians, and 71.4 percent of those polled by the Irish. Bagg, on the other hand, had received the support of 93.5 percent of English, Scottish, and "other" electors, and 90.6 percent of American voters.¹⁷⁷ The results made it evident that the Irish vote could be crucial, in fact decisive, in ridings with a highly mixed ethnic profile. Given the large number of constituencies with large French-Canadian majorities, it was absolutely necessary for the Tories, were they to hold any power within the legislature of the province, to wean the Irish vote to their side, and hold it. This would be one of their constant endeavours during the next decades. Quite clearly, its success would to a large extent depend upon

¹⁷⁴ See chapter III.

¹⁷⁵ Galarneau, pp. 32-34.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 31. Tracey won by 691 to 687.

¹⁷⁷ See appendix G.

an appeal to ethnic prejudice.¹⁷⁸

The results of the election of 1832 indicated as well the social divergence within the province. While Bagg had garnered overwhelming support from merchants and functionaries, Tracey had relied for his margin of victory on artisans, farmers, carters and day laborers. In effect, Bagg had the support of the upper classes and government employees (the latter undoubtedly afraid of losing their positions), while Tracey relied on the lower orders eligible to vote. The middle classes (small businessmen, professionals and "bourgeois") split almost evenly.¹⁷⁹

Shortly after Tracey's victory at the poll, the alliance of Irish

¹⁷⁸ In a letter to Papineau shortly after the election, the reformer Wolfred Nelson remarked on the desperate attempts of the Tories to justify their murders, and commented: "I am not quite pleased with the manner Mr. Tracey defends his cause. It seems to me, a faithful analysis...of all the proceedings of his opponents should have been published. It is not by recrimination and general assertion, that conviction can be brought to the sceptical. It is positive fact, and a connected detail of circumstances that is required for the exposing of the truth. In the same communication he noted his expectation that "the Clergy begin more to see the impolicy of their demeanor [sic] towards the House of Assembly. They must be extremely prejudiced if they do not see that their separating from the influential men of the Country will lead to their downfall, and the consequent injury of the Canadians in general. It is only by a close and compact union of all the Natives of the Country that any hopes are to be entertained of our success against our oppressors. We must sedulously watch the machinations of our enemies, as they will prevail at last, and make slaves of us all." Wolfred Nelson to L.-J. Papineau, 15 June 1832, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 1: 1549-52.

¹⁷⁹ See appendix H. The ethnic and class divergences were reflected regionally, as Tracey easily carried the St. Antoine and St. Joseph suburbs, while Bagg swept the Ste. Anne suburb and the western part of the city proper: see appendix I. It is interesting to note that property owners gave a wide majority to Tracey, 440 to 290, while renters voted for Bagg, 397 to 251. This must, as Galarneau concludes, indicate that many poor French Canadians and Irish owned small homes, while their English, Scottish and German counterparts rented: see Galarneau, pp. 74-75.

and French Canadians was subjected to the devastating arrival of thousands of Irish immigrants, many of whom were infected with cholera. Over fifty thousand new arrivals landed at Quebec during the summer of 1832; more than half of them from Ireland, and, as mentioned in the previous chapter, they spread their diseases far and wide, with thousands of deaths in Montreal and Quebec City. Heroic efforts were made by many people of differing ethnicity to aid the sick and dying, but the fear and resentment of the local population was intense. While such patriote newspapers as La Minerve blamed the British for fostering emigration to transfer their burden to Lower Canada,¹⁸⁰ many French Canadians were as hostile to the result as they were to its cause.

The political ramifications of this development should not be underestimated. One historian has written that had the by-election in Montreal's west ward "been held two months later Tracey would not have been nominated....French Canadian sympathy for the Irish was largely eliminated."¹⁸¹ While this may overstate the case, there is no doubt that French-Canadian tolerance of Irish immigration was being severely tested, nor that the appeal of Tracey to this constituency would undoubtedly have suffered. Two years later, in fact, the patriotes would not run O'Callaghan in the same riding, a point to be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

Tracey, while he managed to overcome the opposition and enmity of his foes, could not fight off the horror transported to Montreal by his Irish brethren, and did not long survive to savour his victory. On

¹⁸⁰ La Minerve, 8 November 1832.

¹⁸¹ Finnegan; p. 46.

18 July, at the age of thirty-eight, he succumbed to cholera.¹⁸² On 12 June he had editorialized about the appearance of the disease: "We are anxious to see what exertion they (the magistrates) will make to resist the progress of this calamity."¹⁸³ Their efforts had been insufficient to preserve the life of the man whom La Minerve eulogized with heartfelt regret as the successor of Waller whose death "nous prive de l'organe qui unissait la population canadienne aux irlandais et aux autres constitutionnels de toute origine."¹⁸⁴ He had been a man of great integrity and courage, a man beloved of all radicals and most Irishmen within the province, a political leader and a journalist whose devotion to the rights and liberties of the people cannot be questioned. But he was also a partisan, and it is ironic that his zeal in opposition to the government had lead him a year earlier to criticize the appropriation of £10,000 for the establishment of boards of health and the introduction of a Quarantine System as ineffective and a waste of money which could only add to the "Cholera Morbus-mania"--there was a good deal of justification for these comments--and to conclude: "The fears on that head (cholera) we would advise the people of Canada to laugh at."¹⁸⁵

The Vindicator was left rudderless with his death, and ceased publication from 17 July until 2 November 1832, when it resumed under the editorship of John Thomas, the founder of the Examiner at

¹⁸² La Minerve, 19 July 1832.

¹⁸³ Vindicator, 12 June 1832.

¹⁸⁴ La Minerve, 19 July 1832.

¹⁸⁵ Vindicator, 2 March 1832.

Boston.¹⁸⁶ Endorsing the policies of O'Connell and the cause of Irish liberty and celebrating the "moral power" of the United States, he concluded his address to the readers:

Here then, in this Province of Lower Canada...we assist in unfurling the broad standard of Reform. Long may it float over this loyal people, and witness a thorough deliverance from wrong, and a bestowment on the part of the Crown of all just rights; thus giving these Provinces... not only a nominal but a real rank among the Colonies of the empire.¹⁸⁷

His tenure as editor was, however, short-lived, as many leading patriotes soon realized the error of choosing someone unfamiliar with the province in preference to the local candidate, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan.¹⁸⁸

Efforts to get O'Callaghan to replace Tracey as both editor of the Vindicator and member of the Assembly for the west ward of Montreal had been initiated shortly after his death, and had met with the approval of such patriotes as Ludger Duvernay and Etienne Parent. O'Callaghan was quite willing, although worried by his lack of financial resources.¹⁸⁹ By the fall of 1832 confusion was reigning among the patriotes. While Duvernay seems to have acquired some control over the

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 27 November 1832. During his tenure it was published by J.A. Hoisington: Beaulieu and Hamelin, p. 65.

¹⁸⁷ Vindicator, 2 November 1832.

¹⁸⁸ La Minerve, 16 May 1833.

¹⁸⁹ L. Winter to Ludger Duvernay, 25 July 1832; Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 367-68.

paper,¹⁹⁰ it reappeared under the editorship of Thomas, not O'Callaghan. The Irish reformers of Quebec were furious, and it was decided to launch a rival newspaper in Quebec City, to be called the Pilot and to be edited by O'Callaghan.¹⁹¹ Many Montreal Irish vowed to desert the Vindicator for the new paper.¹⁹² And Etienne Parent wrote to Duvernay that "Je commence à avoir bonne espérance sur le succès de la nouvelle publication."¹⁹³

Yet while two English language reform newspapers might seem better than one, there was great danger that the rivalry would hurt both.¹⁹⁴ As a result the patriote E.-R. Fabre bought the Vindicator in April of 1833 and O'Callaghan formally assumed the editorship on 14 May. The Vindicator was placed under the doctor's guidance "with written Instructions and understanding that it should support the

¹⁹⁰ Leon Gosselin to Ludger Duvernay, September 1832, Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 393.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., and Leon Gosselin to Ludger Duvernay, 3 October 1832, Gagnon Collection, Montreal Library, G+920.2, D985 co.

¹⁹² Leon Gosselin to Ludger Duvernay, 4 October 1832, Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 453-54.

¹⁹³ Etienne Parent to Ludger Duvernay, 7 November 1832, Gagnon Collection, Montreal Library, G+920.2, D985 co., and Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 463.

¹⁹⁴ Leon Gosselin repeatedly warned Duvernay of the danger of two newspapers. In September of 1832 he wrote: "C'est un malheur, les deux papiers se nuiront. C'est une gaucherie impardonnable de m'avoir pas pris le Dr. pour Editeur." Leon Gosselin to Ludger Duvernay, September 1832, Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 1: 393. And in October he noted: "Il est bon d'avoir plusieurs journaux en anglais; mais il fera un peu de tort au Vindicator." Leon Gosselin to Ludger Duvernay, 3 October 1832, Gagnon Collection, Montreal Library, G+920.2, D985 co.

majority of the Assembly."¹⁹⁵ Over the next four and a half years, O'Callaghan would never deviate from this commitment. But he would also broaden its appeal and increase its circulation, while remaining true to the goals set for it by Tracey.¹⁹⁶

As an Irish emigrant who had lived in both Quebec City and Montreal, O'Callaghan was far better suited to replace Tracey than was Thomas. It is, in fact, almost remarkable that he was not given the position for almost a year after his predecessor's death. Surely the rivalry of the patriotes in the two cities played some rôle in this, as probably did O'Callaghan's Irish origins at a time when pestilence brought on emigrant ships was making Hibernians less than popular among French Canadians. But the response of the Irish in both cities was immediate and intense, and it was in the end recognized that only an Irishman could hope to revitalize the alliance formed by Waller and cemented by Tracey. That alliance was now under great strain, and O'Callaghan would spend the next four years trying to strengthen and maintain it.

At the same time, Papineau and the more radical patriotes were increasing the tone of their opposition to the government. Tension was already mounting between Papineau and John Neilson, and the government was concerned that the patriotes were now aiming at revolution. The ~~governor~~, Lord Aylmer, wrote early in 1833 to the Colonial Secretary that "Papineau and his party are prepared to go all lengths, except to draw the sword. If they did that they would not meet with support from

¹⁹⁵ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 April 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, p. 4372, MG24-B2 3: 4372.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

the great bulk of the French Canadian population."¹⁹⁷ The Assembly refused to pass a supply bill, thus leaving the government groping for funds. Aylmer believed the ultimate objective was "to effect a separation from the mother country."¹⁹⁸ In this atmosphere of mutual distrust, O'Callaghan was about to assume the editorship of the principal English-language organ of the patriotes, and the only Montreal newspaper which aimed at the Irish readers of the city, and the province.

¹⁹⁷ Lord Aylmer to Lord Goderich, 16 February 1833, Lower Canada, State Papers, Q206: Report on Canadian Archives, 1899 (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1900), p. 754. See also Aylmer to Goderich, 30 January 1833, *ibid.*, p. 753.

¹⁹⁸ Aylmer to Goderich, 28 February 1833, *ibid.*

CHAPTER III

THE VINDICATOR

1833-1834

...this being the principal liberal English paper in Lower Canada, the fact must establish in sufficiently intelligible terms, the course we mean to adopt whilst occupying the chair which has been filled with so much honor to themselves, and benefit to the country, by WALLER and TRACEY, our able, patriotic, and deeply lamented predecessors. Chosen to succeed men of such intellectual superiority, as these, it shall be our earnest endeavor, as far as our limited abilities will permit, to support that cause which they consecrated by the loss of liberty and life.

The Vindicator, 14 May 1833¹

When called upon to edit the Vindicator, O'Callaghan seems not to have hesitated, although it required him to move back to Montreal and abandon his medical practice and his home, as well as his friends and acquaintances. It was not the first time he had done so--nor would it be the last.

The new editor was a busy man, and this chapter will follow his career until the passage of the Ninety-two Resolutions by the Assembly in 1834. During this period, O'Callaghan cemented his position among the Irish and the patriotes. However, the arrival of pestilence-infected immigrants added to the pressures on the alliance of French Canadians and Irish, and the Ninety-two Resolutions would pose a new threat to their cooperation.

¹ Vindicator, 14 May 1833.

O'Callaghan, in taking over the Vindicator, was anxious to make clear that he intended no deviation from Tracey's editorial policies. In his statement of principles he proceeded to place himself within the ranks of the long line of people who had been engaged in "the struggle which has been maintained, and is still carried on by the people, slowly yet perceptibly acquiring a sense of their rights, against an oligarchy long in possession of power exercised more for personal or family aggrandizement, than as it ought to have been, for the benefit of all."² Within the province he indicated that he supported the Assembly's demand for the absolute control of finances and independence from British interference in local affairs. He continued his statement with a call for reform:

It shall be our constant aim to watch, protect, and support the constitutional liberties of the people--to advocate the gradual introduction of the representative or elective system of government throughout the country, satisfied that the rights, the interests and institutions of the inhabitants cannot be deposited in safer hands than in those of the people themselves."³

The editorial statement ended with an appeal for support:

Unless, however, we are assisted in these our exertions by a corresponding disposition on the part of the people to advance and defend the great principles at stake, it is in vain for us to struggle....But backed, as we hope to be, by a public spirited, an enlightened, but above all, a united people, the prospect before us cannot be any other

² Ibid. This "war of opinion" had been waged for the past "quarter century." It is interesting that O'Callaghan thus excluded the French Revolution and Irish Rebellion from his time frame, apparently wishing to de-emphasize the links between such violent outbursts and the later constitutional struggles.

³ Ibid., 14 May 1833.

than one of triumph for the good cause and its friends, and ultimate happiness for our adopted country.⁴

With this in mind, the paper adopted the motto: "United, We Stand, Divided, We Fall."⁵ Over the next five years it would reflect the radical reformism and dedication to democracy of its editor.

O'Callaghan was a man deeply devoted to the cause of liberty. The oppression which he had witnessed in Ireland was, he felt, being reproduced in Canada. For the rest of his life he would never abandon his principles, despite the adversity that they would at times cause him. He was, naturally, very much a man of his times: a democratic reformer, he was no socialist revolutionary, but he was probably more fundamentally a democrat than O'Connell or Papineau. Moreover, his cosmopolitan career allowed him a less narrow view of the world than many of his contemporaries, and helped him to see nationalism in terms of patriotic devotion rather than as a narrow matter of birth and blood. As a political activist, he was a fine writer and orator, who at times lacked subtlety, as certainly did William Lyon Mackenzie in Upper Canada. But journalism was generally more brutal then, and O'Callaghan was certainly not exceptional in his time.

The Montreal in which O'Callaghan now established himself, and to which so many other Irish were also attracted, was a large town of a very varied character. Moodie described it in 1832 during the cholera outbreak:

The Town itself was, at that period, dirty and ill-paved; and the opening of all the sewers, in

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

order to purify the place and stop the ravages of the pestilence, rendered the public thoroughfares almost impassable, and loaded the air with intolerable effluvia, more likely to produce than stay the course of the plague, the violence of which had, in all probability, been increased by those long-neglected receptacles of uncleanness.⁶

And a year later, Alfred Domett wrote of it:

Montreal is a fine large town, consisting of a number of very long streets parallel to each other and to the river, quite straight and crossed at right angles by others, some of which stretch into the country to a great distance....The houses are built generally of a grayish stone but have no regularity or uniformity, some being high, some low, some flat-roofed, others slant-roofed. The roofs are chiefly tinned. The streets are very ill-paved, especially the footways, but they are all about to be renewed. The names upon the houses and stores are chiefly Scotch.⁷

Charles Dickens in 1842 also commented on the "narrow and irregular" streets, although he conceded that those in the modern parts of the town were wide and airy.⁸ Traill mentioned the large balconies on many of the buildings, but was not favourably impressed by the city. She wrote:

The river-side portion of the town is entirely mercantile. Its narrow, dirty streets and dark houses, with heavy iron shutters, have a disagreeable appearance, which cannot but make an unfavourable impression on the mind of a British traveller. The other portion of the town, however, is of a different character, and the houses are interspersed with gardens and pleasant walks, which looked very

⁶ Moodie, pp. 20-1.

⁷ Alfred Domett, Canadian Journal, ed. E.A. Horsman and Lillian Rea Benson (London, Ontario: University of Western Ontario, 1955) p. 14.

⁸ Charles Dickens, American Notes for General Circulation and Pictures from Italy (London: Chapman and Hall, 1863; reprint ed., 1913), p. 173.

agreeable from the windows of the ballroom of the Nelson Hotel.⁹

Just as the lower and upper towns in Quebec City, so Montreal was already separated by an invisible wall--no less clearly to the gentlewoman dancing in the ballroom of the Nelson Hotel than to the Irish serving girl working in its kitchen.

The population of the Montreal district grew steadily during these years, from 39,521 in 1827 to 64,897 in 1844. The city, moreover, had, in 1827, nineteen churches (sixteen of them Catholic), thirty-three schools, five convents and three colleges. In 1831 it had 6,379 houses; in 1844, 10,704. In the latter year it also boasted 109 mills, forty-five tanneries, three breweries, five distilleries, five rail factories, three foundries, two oil and two paper manufactures.¹⁰ It was a thriving community with a vibrant commercial life despite the agricultural crisis which overtook the rural areas in the 1830's.¹¹ The Bank of Montreal had been established in 1817, and a Committee of Trade was set up five years later--it would develop into the present Board.¹² But, despite the best efforts of canal builders and merchants, the long trip down the St. Lawrence from Montreal left the city unable to compete

⁹ Traill, p. 26. See also p. 25.

¹⁰ Census, 1827, 1831 and 1844.

¹¹ For the agricultural crisis see R.L. Jones, "Agriculture in Lower Canada 1792-1815," CHR, vol. 27 (1946) and "French Canadian Agriculture in the St. Lawrence Valley, 1815-1850" in W.T. Easterbrook and M.H. Watkins, eds., Approaches to Canadian Economic History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), as well as W.H. Parker, "A New Look at Unrest in Lower Canada in the 1830's," CHR, 1959.

¹² Stephen Leacock, Leacock's Montreal, ed. J. Culliton (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), p. 152; Robert Rumilly, Histoire de Montréal, vol. 2 (Montreal: Fides, 1970), p. 163; William Henry Atherton, History of the Harbour Front of Montreal, (Montreal: City Improvement League, 1935), p. 4.

effectively with New York for the major share of the trade of the interior of the continent.

The city in which O'Callaghan lived had a number of landmarks by 1837. The largest church was that of Notre Dame. There were four nunneries, including the Hotel Dieu Hospital. Ste. Anne's Market was the venue for fresh produce, and the Montreal Library the place for new literature. There were five hotels which could accommodate 370 guests. The Montreal General Hospital had been established in 1818; McGill University in 1821; and the Theatre Royal had opened its doors in 1825. It had its own Temperance, Natural History and Florist Societies, and was periodically visited by animal shows such as the "Grand Caravan" in 1829.¹³ It would seem, therefore, to have been a socially active community.

By the 1830's the Irish formed a significant group within the city which O'Callaghan now called home. The earliest census to record birthplaces, that of 1844, indicates that of the total population of 64,897, 12,293 (18.9 percent) had been born in Ireland, while there were at least 13,169 non-French Catholics in the city, the great majority of whom were certainly Irish.¹⁴ These provided O'Callaghan with most of his supporters. Many Anglicans (Church of Ireland) and Presbyterians,

¹³ Bosworth, pp. 95-182; Vindicator, 3 February and 3 July 1829; Jenkins, p. 275; Montreal Herald, 4 June 1814, in L.M. Wilson, ed., This was Montreal in 1814...1817 (Montreal: privately printed for the Chateau de Ramezay, 1960), p. 6.

¹⁴ There were 33,903 French Canadians; 10,682 English Canadians; 3,532 immigrants from England; 3,155 from Scotland and 791 from the United States. In all of Lower Canada there were 43,982 immigrants from Ireland (6.3% of the population) and 48,195 non-French Catholics: Census, 1844. Maguire, p. 97, estimates there were 8,000 Irish Catholics in Montreal in 1837.

moreover, had also emigrated from Ireland.¹⁵ Most of the Irish Catholics were anything but rich, and lived near the Lachine Canal where a good number of them worked in construction. This area between McGill Street and Point St. Charles became known as Griffintown, a name derived from Griffin's Mills.¹⁶ According to the Irish historian John Francis Maguire, the area came to be identified almost entirely with Montreal's Irish Catholic working class. There was, he states, some poverty and wretchedness, but this was rare and was usually due to drunkenness.¹⁷ There were certainly enough taverns: of sixty-six licensed publicans listed in an advertisement in the Vindicator in 1829, at least twelve (18 percent) had Irish names.¹⁸ For the poor Irishman working in a factory or on the Lachine canal, such distractions were perhaps necessary.

Not all the Montreal Irish, however, were labourers. Many in the area owned farms and undersold French Canadians at the urban markets.¹⁹ Others were domestics, some undoubtedly lured by advertisements such as the following:

Wanted--Two Smart Boys from the age of twelve to fourteen years to reside in the Country, as servants with a gentleman: Emigrants in want of such situ-

¹⁵ See J.I. Cooper, The Blessed Communion (Montreal: Archives Committee of the Diocese of Montreal, 1960), p. 45.

¹⁶ United Irish Societies of Montreal, "Souvenir Program, St. Patrick's Day Celebrations" (Montreal, 1968), p. 3.

¹⁷ Maguire, p. 98.

¹⁸ Vindicator, 2 October 1829.

¹⁹ Adams, p. 354. His source is V.E. Alexander, Transatlantic Sketches (1833), 2: 213.

ation and unacquainted with the town, will be preferred.²⁰

But some of the Irish in Montreal were more fortunate. A few were professionals, like O'Callaghan and Tracey; some were priests; and a number were prominent in wholesale and retail trade.²¹ Thus, as G.R. Keep concludes, it would seem to have been neither a rich nor a poor community, at least by 1850.²² Despite this, the Irishman in the city suffered from a rather negative image which was imported along with the colonial administration from across the Atlantic. As early as 1815, for example, the Marquis of Tweeddale's Masquerade featured "A Demonic Bulgruddery by Major Robinson, truly characteristic of Hibernian Rusticity" which featured a character named Major Martin, "an Irish man all over, even to his buttons which were made of potatoes."²³ Nor should it be forgotten that the Irish community in the city was not homogeneous. There were the relatively well-off Irish, both Protestant and Catholic, such as O'Callaghan, who had come to Canada to seek broader horizons and there were the poorer and mainly Catholic emigrants who arrived in increasing numbers as the decade progressed, culminating in the Famine emigration of the late 1840's. Such poor emigrants, however, had begun to arrive in some number as early as 1819.

There can be little doubt that the arrival of poorer immigrants during the 1830's changed the social composition of the non-French population in Montreal. While the percentage of non-French professionals

²⁰ Vindicator, 2 July 1830. See also Keep, p. 50.

²¹ Ibid. p. 48. See also the advertisements in the Vindicator throughout its existence.

²² Keep, p. 51.

²³ Montreal Herald, 11 March 1815, in Wilson, pp. 19-20.

increased only slightly, from 60 percent in 1831 to 65 percent in 1842, the working class of Montreal which spoke English increased from 49 percent in 1831 to 56 percent in 1842. The change, moreover, was even more drastic among those workers at the bottom of the social ladder: the percentage of English-speaking labourers increased from 50 percent to 63 percent.²⁴ Obviously competition for low-paying, often seasonal work among such workers would be acute, and its affect on the relations between the French and Irish communities in Montréal was fundamental.

When O'Callaghan arrived in Montreal in 1832, he became a member of the growing Irish Catholic community of that city. That community still had neither a church nor the prospect of one, but it had nonetheless been seeking some degree of cogency for at least fifteen years. In 1817, a goodly number of Irish families had been gathered together by Jackson-John Richard at the Bonsecours Church. Richard was a Sulpician priest and native of Virginia who had come to Lower Canada in 1807, abdured his Protestant faith, and studied at the Collège de Montréal. He would continue faithfully to serve the Irish until succumbing to typhus contracted while helping famine immigrants in 1847.²⁵

By 1824 a number of Irish were attending services at St. Jacques Church, and Bishop Lartigue of Montreal wrote Bishop Plessis of Québec

²⁴ Fernand Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 366, 368.

²⁵ Archives of St. Sulpice: Section 16, no. 24: Request of Jackson-John Richard to the Legislative Council to be allowed to remain in Canada: 22 July 1812. He was commonly called Father Richards by the Irish and was also known as Richard Jackson: Slattery, p. 17. See also James R. Danaher, "The Reverend Richard Jackson, Missionary to the Sulpicians," CCHA Report, 1943-44, pp. 49-54.

that he would need a priest there who spoke English to serve the large number of Irish who were direly in need of ministration.²⁶ To fill this need, he chose one of the young Irish ecclesiastics in the province, John McMahon.²⁷ But the facilities available in the city were seen as deficient by both French and English-speaking Montrealers, and a petition of 1823 signed by over 2,000 Catholics called for the construction of a new church.²⁸ Work began on the new cathedral in 1824, but in the meantime another Irish congregation began gathering at Notre Dame Church. It was to serve them that Lartigue sent the first Irish priest he ordained, Patrick Phelan.²⁹

Thus by the mid-1820's there were Irish attending three churches in the city, all with their own priests and special masses.³⁰ In 1829 the new cathedral opened. It assumed the designation of Notre Dame, and

²⁶ Bishop Lartigue to Bishop Plessis, 5 June 1824, RAPQ (1942), pp. 442-43.

²⁷ Lartigue to Plessis, 2 May 1825. Ibid., p. 460. McMahon caused Lartigue some concern. While teaching English at St. Hyacinthe d'Yamaska in 1821, Lartigue had reprimanded him for writing tracts against the drunken Irish of Montreal since he was there to teach English, learn French and study theology: 21 November 1821: ibid., p. 382. Later he wrote Plessis that he would gladly exchange McMahon "dont il ne pourra gouverner la tête irlandaise" for Mr. McSweeney. But on 19 August 1826 he wrote Panet: "M. McMahon restera aussi avec moi cette année: il est très aimé des Irlandais.": ibid., p. 487.

²⁸ Of the 2,055 signatures of the document, 1,786 had French names, 115 English and Scottish, seventy-six Irish and seventy-eight were indeterminate or of other origins: Petition to Joseph-Octave Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, Montreal, 28 September 1822 and 23 April 1823, Archives du Séminaire St. Sulpice, Paris: Documents pour l'histoire de l'Eglise du Canada (1674-1850), vol. 10, no 34: PAC, MG17-A7-1, vol. 7.

²⁹ Lartigue to Plessis, 26 September 1825, RAPQ (1942), p. 467. Phelan was ordained in St. Jacques Church on 24 September 1825.

³⁰ At St. Jacques Church they had a low mass on Sunday after the high mass at 8 a.m.: Lartigue to Plessis, 8 October 1825. Ibid., p. 468.

the old edifice of that name now came to be called the Recollect Church. There, an attempt was made to coalesce the Irish congregations. This effort failed, however, and the Irish were soon attending four churches, as some began frequenting the new Notre Dame.³¹ Predictably, the Irish community found the situation increasingly intolerable, and as early as 1831 they began campaigning to get their own church.³² Then in January of 1833 "the Irish and other Roman Catholics of this City [Montreal] speaking the English language" addressed the following petition to the Rev. J.-V. Quiblier, superior of St. Sulpice and to Mgr. Lartigue:

That the said [Recollect] Church has for many years past, been too limited in extent, and incommodius [sic] in other respects, to contain or accommodate the persons in the habit of attending thereat, ... in consequence whereof disorder and confusion not infrequently occur in the unsuccessful attempt made by all to assist at Divine Service therein.

That...your petitioners being unacquainted with the French language do not comprehend the sermons and religious doctrines from time to time delivered in that language, in the other Roman Catholic Churches in the City, and can consequently derive little if any advantage in the event of their attendance.

That to remedy the evils and inconveniences above mentioned...your petitioners are desirous to build in this city at their own expense, a Roman Catholic Church to be called St. Patrick's Church, and provide means for the support of a clergyman, to take charge of the congregation.³³

³¹ See John J. Kenny, "Irish Community of Montreal, 1817-1968," in *United Irish Societies of Montreal*, p. 3, and *Keep*, p. 78.

³² See the *Vindicator*, 12 April 1831.

³³ Archives of St. Sulpice: 27-97-189.

This petition was signed by 600 English-speaking Catholics, but it did not meet with universal approval. There was a counter request by a group of dissident Irish,³⁴ and the ecclesiastical politics involved were complicated indeed, since both Lartigue and the Sulpicians were interested in the matter. In the end Lartigue decided to support the proposal of the Seminary of St. Sulpice and the Fabrique of Montreal that a church be built on Sulpician land for the English-speaking Catholic community, thus granting the basis of the petition.³⁵ But the clerical wheels would take a long time to turn, and it was not until after Lartigue's death in 1840 that plans for St. Patrick's Church took

³⁴ Lartigue to J.-Vincent Quiblier, 22 January 1833, RAPO (1944), p. 38.

³⁵ Lartigue to Messrs. Rassiter, Donellan, Doyle, Cotteral, Bigly and Drongoole, 24 January 1833, RAPO (1944), p. 38. See Rummilly, pp. 193-4, who comments: "Les Irlandais de Griffintown et des autres quartiers sont en grande majorité catholiques. Mais, malgré le Vindicator, ils ne font pas toujours cause commune avec les Canadiens français. Loin de là. L'ancienne église des Recollets devient trop petite pour recevoir tous les Irlandais de Montréal. Des fidèles suivent les offices agenouillés à l'extérieur de l'église. Les Irlandais demandent une église bien à eux pouvant les contenir tous et les desservir en anglais. Ils ont ramassé six cents signatures au bas d'une requête. Ils souhaitent l'érection d'une paroisse nationale, qui échapperait à la juridiction du Séminaire et de la fabrique. Mgr. Lartigue constate l'inimitié grandissante entre les Irlandais et les fabriciens, "si difficiles à manier et si antipathiques aux enfants d'Erin." Mgr. Lartigue se garde toutefois d'encourager le mouvement. Car s'il redoute les Sulpiciens venus de France, il ne prise guère les prêtres séculiers venus d'Irlande et qui lui causent "plus de désagréments que d'avantages." Mgr. Lartigue ne se fie qu'au clergé canadien. Il suggérerait un échange de sujets avec le futur. Séminaire de New-York, pour que des prêtres canadiens, se perfectionnant en anglais, puissent ensuite desservir la communauté irlandaise. Le Séminaire et la fabrique décident, en principe, la construction d'une nouvelle église, plus vaste, pour les Irlandais, et qui resterait sous leur juridiction."

any concrete form.³⁶

Lack of their own parish did not prevent the Irish from being a vital community. Of the 1,079 children baptized in Notre Dame Parish in 1827, 126 bore Irish names and 105 English or Scots ones; of the 1,439 in 1832, 306 were Irish and 173 English or Scots; and of the 1,323 in 1837, 193 were Irish and 144 English or Scots.³⁷ As for marriages, of the 184 celebrated in 1827, twenty-six were all Irish affairs and nine all English or Scots; ten were alliances between French and Irish, seven between English or Scots and Irish and eight between French and English or Scots; only 122 were all French. By 1832, of the 326 marriages in the parish, eighty-two were all Irish, fourteen all English-Scots, thirteen English-Irish, seventeen English-French, six Irish-French and 191 all French. Of the 195 nuptials celebrated in 1837, fifty-one were exclusively Irish, two English, eight French-Irish, ten English-French, nine English-Irish, and 112 French.³⁸ Thus, the Irish tended to marry among themselves during this period, but they exhibited no marked preference as to the outside group--English or French--with which they would intermarry. O'Callaghan himself married the English-named but

³⁶ Archives of St. Sulpice: 27-97-223. It seems likely that Lartigue's death eased the tension which existed between the new diocese of Montreal and the Sulpicians which had been a major obstacle to the construction of the church. In 1841 a Committee was appointed to effect the construction of a church for the English-speaking Catholics of the city: Archives of St. Sulpice: 27-97-223. The church, St. Patrick's, was completed in 1847. See Keep, p. 79; Maguire, p. 101; Slattery, p. 3; Kenny, p. 25. There was no distinctly Irish Protestant church in the city.

³⁷ Répertoire des Baptêmes, Notre-Dame de Montréal, Parish Register, 1827, 1832, 1837: Archives nationale du Québec (hereafter ANQ). These are kept at the regional center in Montreal.

³⁸ Répertoire des Mariages, Notre-Dame de Montréal, Parish Register, 1827, 1832, 1837: ANQ.

Irish-born and Catholic Charlotte Augustina Crampe of Sherbrooke in 1830, when he was about thirty-three and she about thirty.³⁹

The educational situation of the Irish was inadequate during the 1820's and 1830's. The most prominent school for Irish Catholic children in Montreal was that conducted at the Recollect Church by Father Phelan: The Montreal Catholic School Institution.⁴⁰ But it had competition, as the following advertisement of 1829 demonstrates:

D. Mahony (late conductor of the English school of the Little Seminary,) begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he will on Monday next the 31st Inst. open a SCHOOL in the house at present occupied by Mr. O'Neil, in the rear of the Recollet; where will be taught Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English Grammar, Book-Keeping, the Use of the Globes, and the practical branches of the Mathematics.

N.B....He can devote his morning hours to Private Tuitions, and will have an Evening School from Seven until Nine o'clock.⁴¹

But the people were not satisfied and a Montreal Catholic School Society was formed in 1829 to demand a new school for the poor.⁴²

Although he might lack church and school, the Irishman in Montreal did not lack societies. One of the most vibrant of these was the Society of Friends of Ireland which included in its membership the leaders of the Irish Catholic community in the city, such as O'Callaghan and Dr. Daniel Tracey. It frequently protested the suffering and injus-

³⁹ Monet, p. 555.

⁴⁰ Vindicator, 1 January 1830.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1 September 1829.

⁴² Ibid., 29 December 1829.

tice inflicted on Ireland by its conqueror.⁴³ Another grouping was the Hibernian Benevolent Society which also boasted many prominent members.⁴⁴ It was concerned with the condition of the Irish community both in Lower Canada and in the old country, and maintained a close relationship with the Friends of Ireland, as did the Irish Literary Association, yet another Montreal society.⁴⁵

Such social tendencies proved valuable during the influx of poor immigrants in 1831 and 1832 and the cholera outbreaks of the latter year and of 1834. In the spring of 1831 an Emigrant Society was established by some of the leading Irishmen in Montreal, including Tracey, and it acted in league with the Emigrant Society of Quebec City. During 1831 the Montreal branch raised £676; spent £751; sent 4,022 emigrants on to destinations in Lower and Upper Canada; provided food; and built and repaired a number of sheds for them.⁴⁶

All of these societies were more or less allied to one another, and tended toward a radical branch of politics both in Irish and Lower Canadian terms. Not so the St. Patrick's Society which emerged in 1834 from the British officers' annual celebrations of St. Patrick's Day.⁴⁷ It was run, according to G.R. Keep, by the rich and middle class among the Irish Community, and included many of the leading Tories, both in

⁴³ Ibid., 26, 30 December 1828; 5 April 1830.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 3 March 1829. In Quebec City it had its own rooms: *ibid.*, 27 March 1829.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 11 March 1831.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 14 June, 1 July, 25, 28 October 1831.

⁴⁷ G.J. Fitzgerald, "The Irish in Montreal," in *United Irish Societies of Montreal*, p. 17. See also Slattery, p. 3; Keep, p. 52.

Montreal and Quebec City.⁴⁸

O'Callaghan's appointment as editor of the Vindicator met with general approbation in reform circles. La Minerve welcomed him on 16 May and Le Canadien gave him its approval the next day:

Nous voyons avec plaisir que le Dr. O'CALLAGHAN, ci-devant de cette ville, où il est connu très avantageusement sous tous les rapports, a pris la conduite du VINDICATOR, journal destiné principalement à éclairer l'émigration sur ses vrais intérêts en arrivant dans le pays. Le Dr. O'CALLAGHAN a eu occasion pendant un séjour de plusieurs années en ce pays, de connaître parfaitement et les hommes et les mesures, de sorte qu'on peut le regarder comme l'interprète fidèle des sentiments des deux populations. Le Dr. O'Callaghan s'était assuré en cette ville une existence honorable, et ce n'est ni le besoin, ni l'amour du lucre qui l'a fait embarquer dans la carrière épineuse du journalisme, mais le seul désir d'être utile à sa patrie adoptive. La conduite politique de ce monsieur a été marquée jusqu'ici au coin de la plus parfaite libéralité. Nous attendons beaucoup de sa co-opération dans la cause populaire.⁴⁹

And a month later La Minerve, after due consideration, stated that the Vindicator of O'Callaghan was coming increasingly to remind them, in its fiery expression and dedication to truth, of the newspapers of Waller and Tracey.⁵⁰ The new editor must have been pleased indeed by such praise, even if his appointment had been agreed to in advance by these powerful reform editors.

O'Callaghan was a man well endowed to fulfill the position which

⁴⁸ Keep, p. 83-90; O'Gallagher, Saint Patrick's, p. 59. In 1856 Father Patrick Dowd, rector of St. Patrick's Church, would engineer the expulsion of its non-Catholic members, who formed the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society. Fitzgerald, p. 17.

⁴⁹ Le Canadien, 17 May 1833. See also La Minerve, 16 May 1833.

⁵⁰ La Minerve, 20 June 1833.

Waller and Tracey had, in death, vacated. He was fluent, even eloquent, in both French and English, and could rouse a crowd with his tongue almost as well as he could lash a tyrant with his pen. His caustic wit might sometimes turn vituperative, but this was not necessarily a fault for a man in his position, and, despite a lack of evident grace, he had the ability to make and maintain firm friendships. He was endowed with great learning, but was also renowned for his convivial sociability, a trait always useful in a politician.⁵¹ In his association with the Society of Friends of Ireland, as a founding member and secretary of the Quebec Mechanics' Institute in 1830, and as the recently-elected president of the Quebec Emigrant Society, he had striven to ally the Irish with the French-Canadian reformers. He had also promoted a school for English-speaking Catholics in Quebec City, and, as previously mentioned, as secretary for the committee of stewards of St. Patrick's Church, he had been one of the principal founders of that parish in Quebec City. He had also established a solid medical practice, but his interests clearly lay elsewhere.⁵² In sum, he was a man dedicated to the cause of reform whose character and private life eminently suited him for the rôle in which he was now cast.

Controversy would later arise, however, about O'Callaghan's attitudes and activities just prior to his appointment as editor of the Vindicator. Late in 1836 Le Canadien charged that O'Callaghan had petitioned the Governor, Lord Aylmer, to be government physician before

⁵¹ E.W. Nash, The Catalogue of the Library of the late E.B. O'Callaghan, (New York: Borgs, 1882) contains a list of 2,463 lots for auction. A copy is available at McGill University, McLennan Library, Rare Book Room.

⁵² Monet, pp. 554-555. In Montreal he was elected a member of the management committee of the normal school. See also DNB, p. 790.

the cholera outbreak of 1832, had been rebuffed, and had then gone over to the other side.⁵³ In a long editorial O'Callaghan defended himself, saying that he had petitioned Aylmer for the position on the advice of his then partner, Dr. Lyons, so as to help the expected influx of Irish immigrants, and that he was refused the position because he was already well-known and active in anti-government circles.⁵⁴ His defense was certainly well-founded, since his espousal of and activity in radical causes in Quebec City was well known. Furthermore, he gave up his successful medical practice to become editor of the Vindicator, a post which it seems unlikely was highly lucrative, especially as he had had reservations about taking the position for this very reason. Moreover, despite the requirements of his position as editor, he set himself up in private medical practice in Montreal shortly after his arrival.⁵⁵ Finally, it seems doubtful that he would have received such an offer from the patriotes had they not known him to be a committed reformer, just as his espousal of radical causes seems hardly the action of a man intent upon a government sinecure. Nonetheless, one can only speculate as to the effect a government appointment might have had on the doctor's subsequent career.

The Vindicator under O'Callaghan maintained the format established by Tracey. It habitually contained four pages, almost half of them

⁵³ Vindicator, 20 December 1836; see also Aegidius Fauteux, Patriotes de 1837-1838, ed. M. Félix Leclerc (Montreal: n.p., 1950), p. 336. Le Canadien was moving towards support of the government by 1836, whereas previously it had backed Papineau: see S.D. Clark, Movements of Political Protest in Canada, 1640-1840 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 447.

⁵⁴ Vindicator, 20 December 1836.

⁵⁵ See his advertisement in the Vindicator, 2 July 1833.

devoted to advertisements and notices. Aside from editorial comments, it was made up largely of excerpts from the radical press in Great Britain or the United States, official documents or accounts of parliamentary debates, reports of speeches or the proceedings of meetings, and letters from foreign correspondents or local readers. It gave Irish affairs, especially the speeches and actions of O'Connell, coverage second only to its reporting on Lower Canada. As under Tracey, the paper was usually published twice a week.

An early edition expressed O'Callaghan's general view of the situation of his late, lamented native land. After stating the case of the poor, rack-rented and tithe-bound peasant who was driven to armed resistance by the lack of means of constitutional redress, he concluded:

Is Ireland alone to be an exception to the general rule, that when things come to the worst, they mend? Is her history to be for ever made up of concatenated links of misery, bad government, oppression & resistance? Is love of country to bring down upon her sons alone the uncommiserated vengeance of their rulers, instead of the respect and honor of mankind? Let her oppressor beware--retributive justice may yet have her day.⁵⁶

And in the same issue O'Callaghan warned his readers of a plot by the Tories to purchase, and sub-divide for subsequent resale to suitable buyers, land in the west ward of Montreal, which riding they intended to contest "inch by inch" in the next general election, in an effort to unseat Papineau.⁵⁷ O'Callaghan undoubtedly took a personal interest in the riding as well, for its other representative had been Tracey.

⁵⁶ Vindicator, 17 May 1833.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

In an early editorial O'Callaghan warned the electors of Ste. Anne's of an attempt by the government to turn the ward into a rotten borough.⁵⁸ On 21 June O'Callaghan thundered from his literary pulpit:

If the people then wish to have an end put to the present bad system of transacting their business, and are desirous that a better mode be introduced, let them insist upon a reform in the constitution of the Executive and Legislative Councils of the Province which (constituted as they are at present) only obstruct public business, so that the first body shall be made responsible for its acts, and the Legislative Council be made ELECTIVE.⁵⁹

In the same issue as this editorial, which sounded a note long to be echoed in the pages of the Vindicator and the hearts and minds of its readers, were two long letters of O'Connell gleaned from the foreign press, calling for the equality of Catholics in Ireland.⁶⁰ This division of priority was typical of the paper under O'Callaghan, as it had been under Tracey. It is of interest that in the same edition it was announced, "that the proprietors have completed their Book and Job Printing establishment, by a large addition of Types and Presses, of different sizes and descriptions, equal to any other printing office in the Province."⁶¹ The justification for this endeavour was, according to the Vindicator, the paper's increasing circulation, which was in some places "exclusive" in both Upper and Lower Canada because of "its liberal principles," which in turn made its pages attractive to advertisers

⁵⁸ Ibid., 31 May 1833.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 21 June 1833.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

and allowed it to provide its readers with the most and the earliest local and foreign news, as well as "literary, political and commercial information."⁶²

O'Callaghan took advantage of the consecration of St. Patrick's Church in Quebec City in July to comment in the pages of his newspaper on another of his favorite topics:

We cannot conclude this notice without bearing public testimony to the union and harmony that prevails between the Catholic congregation of Quebec, both Canadian and Irish, which we hope will long continue to be an honorable trait in their characters. This, together with the liberality evinced on all occasions by those professing different religious opinions, cannot but lay the foundation of lasting christianlike charity among the several inhabitants of the city of Quebec.⁶³

The Irishman was intent upon celebrating the union of the common people, despite linguistic or religious differences, and hopeful that this solidarity would ensure the victory of the reformers in the province. He was well aware of the use made by the British in Ireland of sectarianism, and he was hopeful that such a tactic would never succeed in undermining the cause of liberty in his new home. But he knew that the Tories were not oblivious to the potential of such a strategy. In a long exposé on 26 July 1833 he examined the political orientation and national origin of the justices of the peace in the province, and revealed the strong preference shown by the government for Tories of

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 12 July 1833.

British origin.⁶⁴ Such partisanship was probably inevitable, but the preference which it indicated had ominous implications. And O'Callaghan was not loathe to point this out, even if it did fan the flames of ethnic animosity.

The reformers in the province were not only without the benefits of government favour and patronage, but also of wealth equal to that of the Tories. The Vindicator found that of the eighteen newspapers published in the province, eleven were English and only five French (the other two were devoted exclusively to advertising in either language). And while six were "Liberal" and seven "anti-Liberal," in the cities of Quebec and Montreal the reformist Vindicator, La Minerve and Le Canadien were opposed by the conservative Herald, L'Ami du Peuple, Montreal Gazette, Courant, Mercury and Quebec Gazette.⁶⁵ The same point was made by Duvernay in a letter to the editor of the American Old Countryman, suggesting that his newspaper merited wider circulation in Lower Canada because of its "independent and impartial" coverage of affairs in the province, in which he commented: "You are very right in saying that few of the Montreal papers are the real friends of the people, et [sic] the lesson you give to the Gazette is equally [sic] applicable to the Herald, Courant, & L'Ami du Peuple with which the...Minerve & Vindicator

⁶⁴ Ibid., 26 July 1833. In Montreal, of 279 Justices of the Peace, seventy had favoured the petition of 1827 (i.e. were favourable to at least some measure of reform), while 183 had opposed it and the positions of the remaining twenty-six were unknown; eighty-four were of apparently French origin, 195 of British or other origin (within the City of Montreal, the figures were 12, 26, 4, 15, 27). In the district of Quebec, fifty were French, sixty-seven British or other; in Trois-Rivières district, 26 and 32; in St. Francis, all twenty-nine were British or other.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 20 August 1833.

have been at war."⁶⁶ Of course, since many people, especially among the rural and working populations, were illiterate, and would hear the news at communal readings in taverns or street corners, and since poorer people who could read would often pass copies of newspapers on to others, circulation figures would translate only very indirectly into influence.

O'Callaghan delighted in attacking the Tory press, and he did so whenever the opportunity arose. When the Herald proposed in early September that the separation of the Canadas be rescinded by Britain, the Vindicator contended that the Herald editorial was based upon a misinterpretation of Canadian history and suggested:

Before the Herald talks again of "replacing this country in the same position in which Great Britain first acquired it"--or of "making it the Province of Quebec" it would be well if he [the editor] sat down and studied the history of Canada. He would thereby avoid exposing his ignorance and utter unfitness for the rank he has unmeritedly assumed, amongst the journals of Lower Canada.⁶⁷

The war of words between these two papers remained a feature of the province's journalism until the demise of one of the warriors in 1837.

In December O'Callaghan, commenting on the approaching session of the Assembly, reiterated his call for reform, asking rhetorically: "How long shall it be before Lower Canada have the power to bring to account her Governors, Legislators, and public servants if they do wrong? However long will it be before she enjoy the blessings of a Representative

⁶⁶ Ludger Duvernay to the editor of the Old Countryman, 1 September 1832: Duvernay Correspondance, PAC, MG24-C3, I: 397-400.

⁶⁷ Vindicator, 6 September 1833.

and responsible form of Government?"⁶⁸ Later in the month he noted that the government was seeking, among the representatives in the House of Assembly, new members for the Legislative Council, but warned that this manoeuvre would make that body no more popular than it was.⁶⁹ The new session was much on O'Callaghan's mind during this period, and he was in close communication with the other leaders of the reform party. In a letter of 3 January he warned Papineau that, at a gathering of reformers at Dr. Vallée's house, LaFontaine had indicated that an attempt should be made to get a copy of the despatch recently sent by the colonial Office to Lord Aylmer and excerpted in the Vindicator and La Minerve. He continued: "I had not an opportunity to tell him not to act in the matter without conferring with you. But I wrote to him today requesting him to be cautious and not to make any motion without first speaking to you."⁷⁰

Once the session had begun the issue of emigration came to the fore, as the government proposed that a tax be placed on persons arriving in the province. This issue was a powerful tool in the hands of the Tories in their attempts to drive a wedge between the Irish and the French Canadians.⁷¹ The latter resented the settlement on available land of English, Scottish, Irish and American emigrants, and were antagonistic to the establishment of English land law in parts of their province. They were, moreover, fearful of competition for jobs. But it

⁶⁸ Ibid., 13 December 1833.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 27 December 1833.

⁷⁰ O'Callaghan to Papineau, 3 January 1834, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 1765-66.

⁷¹ See Nolte, pp. 185-86; and Finnegan, p. 59.

was not until 1832, when cholera had killed 8,000 people in Montreal and Quebec City alone, that the Canadiens became alarmed by the threat of excessive immigration, some even suspecting that the British were despatching masses of Irishmen to their shores in order to wipe out the old population. Nor was this feeling abetted by the actions of English merchants who, anxious for fares, were willing to transport anyone--sick or hale.⁷² Papineau nonetheless remained attached to the concept of Irish support, and he was willing to pay the price for it by opposing the proposed levy.⁷³ But Le Canadien, located in Quebec where the worst ravages of cholera were always felt, broke ranks and supported the government on the issue.⁷⁴

It was during this same session that the Assembly passed the Ninety-two Resolutions. These were approved in the Assembly by a vote of fifty-six to twenty-three but clearly originated the split within the reform camp which would eventually lead to the debacle of 1837.⁷⁵ Moderate reformers such as John Neilson could not support some of the resolutions and would find themselves thrown into the arms of the government, in which sometimes uncomfortable embrace they would be joined over the next four years by others wary of the direction of events. This is not surprising, since the vagueness of some of the resolutions could not conceal their basic radicalism. They called for an elective Legislative Council (although they included, reluctantly,

⁷² Joseph Schull, Rebellion (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 29-30.

⁷³ See his speech in Le Canadien, 20 January 1834, p. 1.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 7 February 1834.

⁷⁵ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journals, vol. 43 (1834), p. 337-38. See also Wade, pp. 142-43.

Neilson's earlier acceptance of some very limited property qualification to sit on it) since the present body was an attempt to form an aristocracy in a country without one and prevented the people from exercising any influence over the executive. They praised the American constitution and warned the government that reformers or radicals far outnumbered Tories in North America. They defended the right of the French-Canadian people to both their language and their rights as guaranteed in 1763 and again in 1791. They called for the repeal of the Tenures Act, which did not really favour the censitaires, but merely turned over complete possession of the land to the seigneurs while removing all their responsibilities. They complained that positions in the administration and judiciary were dominated by English appointees, many of whom were not even local residents. They claimed for the Assembly all the "powers, privileges and immunities" of the British House of Commons, and the right to subpoena anyone to testify, and they called for the impeachment of Governor Aylmer because of his unjust, unconstitutional and illegal rule. And they threatened to withhold supply until the grievances listed were rectified. Finally they praised Daniel O'Connell for his attempts in the British House of Commons to have the government of the Canadas reformed.⁷⁶

This program of reform was the basis of the radical platform for the next three years, and it was at about the same time that the Vindicator adopted an additional motto: "Justice to all classes--Monopolies and Exclusive Privileges to none."⁷⁷ In principle, the resolutions

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 310-35. See also Wade, pp. 142-43. For the Tenures Act, see Creighton, pp. 227, 257, 273.

⁷⁷ It was first used on 3 January 1834.

called for a democratic republic--but of property-owners. Naturally Papineau qualified: he owned 178,000 arpents (about 150,000 acres) of land and was entitled to a salary of £1,000 a year from the government as Speaker of the Assembly.⁷⁸

The Ninety-two Resolutions marked another step in the evolution of patriote thinking from moderate reformism to republican nationalism, but as Fernand Ouellet comments, they "also could be read by English-speaking radicals, American democrats, and liberal and Catholic Irishmen as a democratic manifesto."⁷⁹ Their subtlety was more than contrived --it represented real differences among the membership. The moderate John Neilson had already split with Papineau a year earlier over the question of parish councils, but the resolutions confirmed that his brand of politics was now passé, and Papineau would soon consider him a traitor.⁸⁰

Not surprisingly, O'Callaghan and the Vindicator gave unqualified support to the Resolutions. They were intended to rally the mass of the patriotes behind the leadership, and to help the prospects of victory in the 1834 elections. But the trend toward more radical nationalism which they signalled, and the declining economic situation which they reflected, would soon put the patriote leaders in a very difficult position, for they were committed to goals which they had no means of achieving, but which many of their supporters were now expecting!

⁷⁸ Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 193-94, 218; Brown, p. 12.

⁷⁹ Ouellet, pp. 224, 231.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 229-30. William Lyon Mackenzie wrote later to Neilson that most reformers ascribed Neilson's defection to "personal pique." The proposed loi des fabriques would have given great control of church affairs to democratically elected parish councils, and was strongly opposed by the Catholic hierarchy: Finnegan, p. 60.

CHAPTER IV

MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

1834-1835

Je considèrerais comme un devoir dans toutes les occasions, de soutenir toutes mesures qui auront pour objet l'extension des privilèges politiques du peuple de cette province.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1834¹

With the passing of the Ninety-two Resolutions, the patriotes had greatly escalated the tone of their protestations against the government. They were certainly likely to antagonize the administration and to frighten the more timid members of the reform movement. Exactly what they were intended to achieve is more difficult to ascertain. While many of the demands were quite reasonable in themselves, the general impression created by them was of a sort of ultimatum. How this was to be backed up, however, was left unclear. In the event, the British authorities despatched a new governor and a commission of inquiry to investigate the grievances which the Assembly had advanced. With the deterioration of the economic situation, especially in some rural areas, and with the growth of ethnic animosities based on mutual fear and suspicion, constructive compromise became increasingly chimerical.² At the same time, the patriotes seemed woefully unable to proceed beyond

¹ E.B. O'Callaghan to the electors of Yamaska, 12 November 1834, in La Minerve, 13 November 1834.

² See Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 177-182, 262-64; Wade, pp. 152-54.

increasingly strident criticism to the formulation of a politically feasible plan of reform or of revolution.

This chapter will consider first the elections of 1834 which were the last ever held in Lower Canada, and which resulted in a sweeping victory for the patriotes, including O'Callaghan. Yet the results do not hide the fact that the alliance of Irish and French Canadians within the reform movement was becoming increasingly strained, and that the government and its Tory allies were intent on taking advantage of that situation and nurturing the dissent which they had also helped to sow. Yet O'Callaghan, it will be shown, did not waiver in his allegiance, but soon established himself as one of the government's most persistent foes in the House of Assembly, while still editing the Vindicator and acting as a leader among the Irish of Montreal. So obnoxious was he to the Tories that physical violence was even used against him. By the end of 1835 he was one of the most important patriotes in the province, Papineau's English-speaking lieutenant and increasingly his closest advisor. It was a great deal of responsibility for a man not yet forty, whose political and journalistic involvements were of very recent vintage and who was attempting to guide the destiny of a place and a people to which he was but a recent arrival.

The spring of 1834 saw O'Callaghan not only concerned with the Ninety-two Resolutions, but also with the local Irish community. He chaired the assembly held in celebration of St. Patrick's Day on 17 March which featured many toasts favorable to Irish liberty and the radical cause in Lower Canada.³ The very next day his pen was roused

³ La Minerve, 20 March 1834.

to fury by the Herald which had featured in the same issue an article on "Irish Loyalty" which sought, according to O'Callaghan, to entice Hibernian votes in the impending elections by deception and flattery into the Tory camp, and another on "IRISH fools" which was a blatant insult to people of Celtic ancestry. Furiously indignant at this apparent contempt for the Irish, and aware of the opportunity it provided him for invective, O'Callaghan snarled: "We will treasure these with other insults, fast in the inmost recesses of our hearts, and prove to the faction of which the Herald is the organ, by our votes at the coming Election, that Irishmen never forget an insult."⁴ But the Tories were persistent, and were attempting to attract Irish votes throughout the province.

At an assembly of some 600 Irish in Quebec City on 5 April, Thomas Begly denounced the policies of Papineau and the Legislative Assembly, and accused the radical leader of using the Irish as unwitting instruments of his policy.⁵ The patriotes were swift to respond to this attack on their alliance. At an assembly of Irish in Montreal on 10 April, presided over by John Turney, Begly was savaged, the egalitarian policies of O'Connell were endorsed, and it was resolved "Que les habitants Irlandais de cette cité ne soutiendront aux prochaines élections que les candidats qui posséderont la confiance du peuple, et qui s'engageront à soutenir les libertés et les vrais intérêts du pays."⁶ At the same time a committee of forty was established to guide Irish

⁴ Vindicator, 18 March 1834.

⁵ La Minerve, 14 April 1834; Le Canadien, 16 April 1834.

⁶ La Minerve, 14 April 1834.

voters lest they be led astray by the likes of Begly.

In Quebec City an assembly of 600-700 Irish gathered to hear the Irish Tory denounced and a similar committee was formed. Le Canadien commented: "Nous abandonnons M. Begly au jugement de ses compatriotes. Nous voyons avec plaisir que nos concitoyens Irlandais se sont organisés et ont résolu [sic] de nommer un comité pour se mettre et [sic] garde contre la déception dont ils ont souvent été la victime de la part des ennemis des Canadiens qui sont aussi les leurs."⁷ The patriotes were not going to surrender the Irish vote easily.

In the Vindicator of 25 April O'Callaghan launched another Broadside at the government, listing no less than thirty-one grievances, which showed the authorities to be autocratic and the people powerless, and concluded: "Whoever will take the trouble of studying the above catalogue, incomplete as it is, will perceive at a glance, that we can scarcely be worse off than we are."⁸ Earlier in the month he had participated at a patriote assembly in L'Acadie, and had acted with C.-O. Perrault as secretary of a meeting in Montreal, which would form the Central and Permanent Committee of the District of Montreal.⁹ Such meetings were being held across the province in support of the Ninety-two Resolutions and O'Callaghan was a frequent participant. Some Tories

⁷ Le Canadien, 16 April 1834.

⁸ Vindicator, 25 April 1834.

⁹ La Minerve, 5 May and 8 September 1834.

tried, with little apparent success, to curtail such assemblies.¹⁰ Bishop Jean-Jacques Lartigue of Montreal felt they "were becoming tumultuous and violent."¹¹ So many meetings were held, moreover, that books filled with signatures in support of the resolutions were sent to London. O'Callaghan himself delivered them as far as New York.¹²

Despite the general patriote offensive, the Tories doggedly continued to fish for votes in Irish waters, issuing pamphlets and anonymous letters as bait. The Vindicator was incensed by this:

The Tories of this City "whose days are dwindled to the shortest span," have been lately making the most powerful efforts to win over the Irish to their side, and to induce this determined and high-minded portion of our fellow citizens, to become renegades to their politics, to turn traitors to those sacred principles which they have imbibed with their mothers' milk.¹³

The Herald in particular was once again singled out as the most obnoxious organ of the Tory hydra and its hypocritical attempts to gain the votes of men it despised and often ridiculed, exposed and denounced.

By the late summer of 1834 cholera was once more ravaging the country, brought over on emigrant ships from England and Ireland. This naturally increased the strain on the alliance of French Canadians and

¹⁰ Robert Hoyle to his wife, 3 May 1834, Hoyle Papers, PAC, MG24-B141, part 1, pp. 1-2.

¹¹ Lartigue to D.-B. Viger (London), 15 April 1834, RAPQ (1943-44), p. 261. The bishop also believed "the next elections would be hotly contested and perhaps bloody" but commented that "few of the clergy ever become involved in partisan politics".

¹² Le Canadien, 6 June 1834.

¹³ Vindicator, 11 July 1834.

Irish, and gave the Tories increased confidence that they could capture Irish votes. O'Callaghan tried to concentrate his readers' attention on familiar issues, denouncing for example the establishment of the British American Land Company and calling upon people to vote for "only such Representatives at the approaching Elections, as will pledge themselves not to cease their opposition until the OBNOXIOUS Act be repealed."¹⁴ But such issues had limited appeal, and the Tories were in an advantageous position on two counts: the Ninety-two Resolutions had undoubtedly frightened many Irish by their tone, and the cholera outbreak was adding to the tensions between the Irish and French-Canadian communities. Not that the Tories lacked respect for O'Callaghan's influence: those in the Eastern Townships set out to disrupt the circulation of the Vindicator in that area by discouraging stage drivers from delivering it.¹⁵

O'Callaghan was meanwhile preoccupied with keeping the loyalty of the Montreal Irish. As well as acting as secretary of the Central and Permanent Committee of the District of Montreal, he chaired a meeting of the Irish electors of the west ward of the city on 2 October.¹⁶ The meeting was turbulent, and the Tory Irish attacked Tracey's memory, one going so far as to call him a hireling. But they were in the end routed by the reformers who carried resolutions first passed at a meeting in April to establish a Standing Committee to direct the Irish and protect

¹⁴ Ibid., 12 August 1834. The bill soon after received royal assent: *ibid.*, 5 September 1834. The italics were in the original.

¹⁵ Ibid., 12 September 1834. They had earlier ruined the proprietor of the liberal St. Francis Courier.

¹⁶ La Minerve, 8 September 1834 (from the Vindicator).

them from deception.¹⁷ O'Callaghan then addressed the gathering.

...and took the opportunity of explaining at some length the great questions which were at present agitating the Province, and hoped that his fellow-countrymen would be watchful, united, and on their guard, and continue to support those principles, as they always so honourably have done, which the great O'CONNELL was promulgating to the world--he concluded by pledging himself that they should always find him ready at his post, to forward their interests and the good cause as far as his humble abilities allow him.¹⁸

The Tories took scant notice of this rebuff, and put forward a prominent Irish Catholic, John Donellan, as one of their candidates, intent upon attracting Irish electors. La Minerve commented acidly: "M. John Donellan...n'est mis en avant que par une faible coterie qui, excitée par la clique écossaise dont elle dépend, cherche par tous les moyens possibles à semer la désunion parmi les Canadiens et les Irlandais."¹⁹ In an editorial of 10 October, O'Callaghan advised the Irish of the district to remain uncommitted until "the fog clears" and refrain from endorsing the Irish Protestant gentleman Sidney Bellingham, another candidate seeking their votes under what the editor considered false pretences.²⁰

Four days later, a meeting of "the committee of the Irish electors of Montreal West" chaired by O'Callaghan, resolved to support Papineau for re-election to one of the west ward seats, and that his

¹⁷ Vindicator, 3 October 1834.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ La Minerve, 6 October 1834.

²⁰ Vindicator, 10 October 1834.

colleague must support an elective Legislative Council and elective institutions in general, control of the revenues of the province by the Assembly and the Ninety-two Resolutions, while he must oppose the Land Company, a permanent civil list and British intervention in the internal affairs of Lower Canada--and he must pledge not to accept any government post.²¹ But the Tories were also active among the Irish, and a meeting was held on 16 October in support of the candidacies of Donellan and Bellingham. It was addressed by Donellan who attacked Papineau, O'Callaghan and the Vindicator.²²

That paper, meanwhile, reported that Papineau's opponents were determined to unseat him, basing their hopes principally on three considerations. The first was the fact that Tracey's majority in the 1832 election was only four, and they considered Papineau to be no more popular in the district. The second was their

...hope that the ravages of the cholera, and other causes may have so reduced the stock of liberal votes as to give them a majority. And the third was the division which they flatter themselves they have made in the Irish ranks, by the means of Mr. Donellan. They imagine that the Irish Electors, contrary to their well established reputation for consistency, and liberal principles, will support the Tory ticket, because they hold out a Tory Irishman to them as a decoy, and they chuckle at the idea of having at last neutralized and nullified the Irish party, and made them subservient to their hateful schemes.²³

O'Callaghan argued that, unlike Tracey, Papineau was assured of the

²¹ La Minerve, 16 October 1834; Vindicator, 17 October 1834.

²² Vindicator, 17 October 1834.

²³ Ibid.

votes of almost all Canadiens in the ward; that cholera "does not distinguish between political parties," and that "The Irish people are wide awake to the game that is playing, and they will not be cajoled out of their sense, nor into supporting a person whose principal, and only friends are the Herald, and Gazette, and the other notorious defamers of the Irish name, and of the patriotic DANIEL O'CONNELL."²⁴

But the danger was very real, and the editor was taking no chances. His confidence in Papineau's popularity was tempered with caution, and he felt it appropriate to hurl a demoralizing threat into the Tory ranks:

It is unwise, therefore, in the Tories, to calculate on the preceding considerations, to throw out Papineau. They will only encounter dishonourable defeat. Not only are their calculations unwise, but it is not in accordance with the interests of the commercial community to put Mr. PAPINEAU out, even if they were able. They ought to recollect that the CHARTERS of both their Banks expire in 1837, and will come before the ensuing Parliament for renewal. We warn them, in time, to weigh this circumstance well, before they insult the House of Assembly in the person of its Speaker. They may pay dearly for the attempt.²⁵

The reform interests would soon after the elections found the Banque du Peuple, so the threat was not an idle one.

The patriotes, after much vacillation, finally chose Robert Nelson to run with Papineau in the west ward of Montreal.²⁶ They conspicuously did not choose Tracey's successor at the Vindicator, and not

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 27 October 1834.

because he was reluctant to enter active politics: he was "parachuted" instead into the safe patriote seat of Yamaska. Clearly, the reformers had been concerned by Tracey's extremely narrow victory two years earlier. Any slippage of French or Irish support could prove fatal, and it would certainly be difficult to improve on the results among those voters. Thus, an attempt to appeal to the English, Scottish and American voters by nominating someone of English and Loyalist origin must have seemed attractive to the patriotes. At the same time, the Irish-French alliance was undoubtedly under severe strain because of growing antipathy between the two communities caused by the growth of French-Irish competition for employment in the area and the unintentional importation of cholera and other diseases into the province which frightened many French Canadians.

It must therefore have seemed wise to the patriotes to try to defuse the tension by nominating someone who was not Irish and would not antagonize any non-Irish voters who might vote reform. The Irish vote was certainly not taken for granted, but some of it would have to be sacrificed to assure victory. And the Tories were doing their best to capture as much of that vote as they could anyway. They saw it as vulnerable because of the growing ethnic accent within the patriote movement, and its increasing radicalism since the passage of the Ninety-two Resolutions.²⁷

²⁷ Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 232 states that O'Callaghan "would almost certainly be beaten in Montreal West," but provides no substantiation. In fact the major argument for believing that he might well have lost is the fact that the patriotes chose to run him elsewhere, but it is not conclusive evidence that he could not have won--only that his friends feared his defeat. Tracey, after all, had only barely won in 1832.

The Tories immediately turned their fire on Robert Nelson in the west ward, alleging in a placard distributed throughout the district and subsequently reprinted in the Herald and the Gazette that he had insulted the Irish. This ploy was designed to further split the Irish vote, and was taken very seriously by the patriotes. A deputation of four Irishmen visited Nelson and were assured by him that he had not spoken the words which were ascribed to him, and that he had the "greatest respect, on account of their fidelity to their principles," for the Irish.²⁸ In the same issue of the Vindicator which published Nelson's denial, a correspondent warned the Irish that there were traitors in their midst and that the Tories were "using every effort to divide our interests."²⁹ The campaign in Montreal was extremely heated, but O'Callaghan could not devote all his energies to it as he had to give some of his time to his own candidacy in Yamaska.³⁰

O'Callaghan was running in a constituency which was not very congenial to his background. Yamaska was a rural district situated on the east side of the St. Lawrence River between Montreal and Quebec City. It was one of the smaller counties in the province, with a population of about 12,000 at this time.³¹ Its inhabitants were almost exclusively rural and French-Canadian, with a mere handful of English-Canadian and

²⁸ Vindicator, 24 October 1834. The four Irishmen who were sent to visit Nelson were Francis Joseph Ryan, John Reegan, John Byrne and Patrick Brennan.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Thus, he was absent from a meeting of the committee of Irish electors held in Montreal early in November. La Minerve, 3 November 1834.

³¹ Census, 1831 and 1834, p. 148. In 1831 its population was 11,312; in 1844, 12,352.

Irish families living in the district.³² Thus O'Callaghan had to rely upon the reform sympathies of the electorate (the district was in the main area of disaffection in 1837) and the support of Papineau and his "party" to win his seat in the assembly. Certainly he had little in common with his constituents, who called him the doctor "qu'a la gale."³³

As might have been expected, the campaign in the west ward was not without violent incidents. Papineau in his election address warned his supporters that the Tories were raising large sums of money to corrupt and to terrorize the electorate, and that they revelled in violence.³⁴ Both sides considered the campaign to be of the greatest importance, and once the polls opened, passions were at a fever pitch. The Vindicator was published daily, while the Herald and Gazette spared no effort in their vilification of the reformers. Nor did the reform press treat Donellan and William Walker, the Tory candidates, any more kindly.³⁵ The near riot which ensued on 31 October was, according to

³² In 1844 there were 12,201 French Canadians, sixty-eight English Canadians, thirty-six Irish, twenty-one Americans, and three English: see appendix E.

³³ Monet, p. 555, and Durley, p. 28. The latter speculates that the "itch" in question may have referred to his persistence, but it could certainly refer to some physical characteristic as well.

³⁴ Address of the Hon. L.-J. Papineau to the Electors of the West Ward of Montreal (Montreal: Fabre, Perrault, 1834), Gagnon Collection, Montreal Public Library. He also claimed that many subscribers to Bagg's 1832 campaign had since gone bankrupt--owing £200,000--and asked rhetorically: "In two years and a half from this time, who can say to how much larger an amount the subscribers to the Donnellan and Walker funds will have robbed the widow and orphan by similar bankruptcies?" This would not be surprising, since he claimed that only members of the British party ever got bank loans.

³⁵ Sidney Bellingham ran as an independent when he failed to get one of the Tory nominations, and undoubtedly split the Tory vote.

O'Callaghan, the result of Tory desperation, and he called upon the opposition to abide by the principles of British fair play. He blamed the affair mainly on the Tory press, and contended that it was instigated by hirelings.³⁶ The Tories, on the other hand, blamed the Irish for the trouble, and this brought forth a swift response from the Vindicator:

We were very indignant, in common with the mass of the Irish Electors of the West Ward, at hearing it stated that the body of rioters who disturbed the poll yesterday morning, and so shamefully assaulted the Electors, were principally made up of Irishmen. Never was there a greater falsehood spoken, for we assert without fear of contradiction, that not one Irish (Tracey) Elector, with perhaps the exception of Doyle and another, had hand, act or part in the ruffianly proceedings.³⁷

A meeting of the Irish electorate was called to refute the slanders.³⁸

Because of the constant threat of violence, the election in the west ward had to be ended prematurely on 17 November. Papineau and Nelson were declared elected--but with a majority of only forty votes.³⁹ The Vindicator was pleased by the victory, but enraged at what it considered the Tory tactics of intimidation:

The conduct of the supporters of Messrs. Walker and Donellan was, especially for the three preceding days, of such a character as to put their intentions of violence beyond a doubt. Under these circumstances, to continue the Election would be only exposing these persons and their friends, and,

³⁶ Vindicator, 1 November 1834. -

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Duelling, Lower Canada, p. 234.

perhaps, numbers of others, to a loss of their lives, and the city again to a repetition of the scenes of 1832.⁴⁰

La Minerve also placed the blame for the violence endemic to the election in the west ward on the Tories.⁴¹ A month later Papineau fiercely denounced the tactics employed by his opponents, accusing them of being prepared to intimidate and even murder in order to achieve their purposes.⁴² In fact, defeat seems only to have fired the Tories' vindictiveness: both William Walker and Dr. Robertson challenged Papineau to a duel after the election, offers which he contemptuously declined.⁴³ O'Callaghan gloated that the two were "objects now more of pity than of anger, for, like the Boa Constrictor, Mr. Papineau coiled himself around them, and crushed...their political power."⁴⁴ O'Callaghan could never resist kicking a dead horse, especially if it was wearing a harness trimmed in blue.

The patriotes swept most of the polls across the province in 1834. They received 77 percent of the votes cast, and elected seventy-nine of the eighty-eight members of the Assembly (forty-one of them by acclamation), and all those from Montreal and Quebec City.⁴⁵ Included among the patriote members were at least a dozen who were not French

⁴⁰ Vindicator, 18 November 1834.

⁴¹ La Minerve, 17 November 1834.

⁴² Vindicator, 9 December 1834.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 235, 240-41; Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835, p. 17.

Canadian.⁴⁶ And in Deux-Montagnes the reformers carried the election only with the help of a large number of Irish Catholics.⁴⁷ Yet there is no doubt that the Irish vote was in many cases split, and Papineau denounced the Irish Tories who had seen in their homeland the results of oppression, yet supported it in Lower Canada.⁴⁸

The violence of the 1834 election, which they blamed totally on the Tories, angered the patriotes and convinced many of them that their opponents were not prepared to accept the will of the people. A letter of 20 November 1834, addressed by Papineau, O'Callaghan, A.-N. Morin, C.-O. Perrault, Robert Nelson and L.-H. LaFontaine, all members of the Assembly resident in Montreal, to their colleagues in Quebec City, called for the establishment of committees of correspondence as outlined in the Ninety-two Resolutions, so that the people might prepare to defend themselves; for action to be taken on those resolutions; for the abolition of the land company and the present system of concession; for cooperation with the representatives of the people of Upper Canada "et des autres colonies voisines;" and for the adoption "de moyens de protection nationale contre le système d'exclusion industrielle et commerciale commencé par nos adversaires."⁴⁹

⁴⁶ The Assembly included at least 21 non-French members, more if one counts such members as René Joseph Kimber and Pierre Martial Bardy: Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835, p. 17.

⁴⁷ Quellet, Lower Canada, p. 236.

⁴⁸ La Minerve, 4 December 1834, cited in Quellet, Lower Canada, p. 235.

⁴⁹ Lettre de certains membres du district de Montréal à des membres du district de Québec, 20 November 1834, Gagnon Collection, Montreal Public Library.

The committees of correspondence were soon established, and were dominated by prominent patriotes who were also members of the Assembly. Although there were English and Irish participants, the overwhelming majority of the membership was French-Canadian, even in Montreal and Quebec City, which is not surprising, as the attempt by Papineau and O'Callaghan to maintain the political alliance of French and Irish was coming under increasing strain.⁵⁰ The United Irish had used the same tactic--that of corresponding societies--in its efforts to maintain the morale of its members, and to develop ties with like-minded people outside of Ireland. Naturally, such societies provided limited access to the majority of the population which was illiterate, although, like newspapers, the correspondence could be read to the unlettered, both in homes and public houses. However, as the crisis approached, the patriotes would rely increasingly on the far more accessible medium of rhetoric, in which Papineau, O'Callaghan and many others among them excelled.

The patriotes were anxious, however, to build a material base for their enterprises, and to remove some of the resources concentrated in Tory-controlled banks. As a result--and undoubtedly to the personal benefit of some--the Banque du Peuple was established in 1835. Its prospectus, however, made clear that it was also intended to generate development and benefit the French-Canadian population "dans le circulation des capitaux qui maintenant ne profitent pas à la Société en faisant naître et protégeant l'industrie en général, et surtout en aidant et favorisant l'agriculture, le commerce et les manufactures dont

⁵⁰ Montréal: Comité de Correspondance, PAC, MG24-B129, and Québec: Comité de Correspondance, PAC, MG24-B128.

Les bienfaits s'étendent à toutes les classes de la Société."⁵¹ It was intended as an attack on the monopoly capitalism of the rich English merchants favored by the government, as was also the *Maison Canadienne de Commerce*.⁵² Such institutions were indicative of a commercial and entrepreneurial spirit--not the regressive neo-feudalism which Fernand Ouellet sees as characteristic of the patriotes.⁵³

O'Callaghan had been successful in his bid for a seat in the Assembly as the representative for Yamaska, and he addressed the following letter to the electors in appreciation of their support: "Choisi...principalement en considération de ces grands principes que j'ai soutenus avec la grande majorité du pays, je suis engagé à les mettre en pratique."⁵⁴ O'Callaghan claimed in the Vindicator after the election that the Tories in the riding had attempted to raise the issue of his Irish nationality, but that the voters "disregarded origin and stuck to principle."⁵⁵

The election of 1834 had been characterized by an increasing degree of desperation on both sides. Many Irish had been deeply involved in the reform cause, but the Tories, aside from the support of

⁵¹ La Minerve, 26 February 1835, cited by Jean-Louis Roy, Edouard-Raymond Fabre (Montreal: Hurtubise HMH, 1974), p. 124. Banks then printed their own currency, and on its two dollar bill was the portrait of Daniel O'Connell! Finnegan, p. 61.

⁵² Roy, pp. 125-27.

⁵³ See Fernand Ouellet, Economic and Social History of Quebec, 1760-1850 (n.p.: Gage, 1980), p. 445.

⁵⁴ La Minerve, 13 November 1834, p. 3. The letter was dated 12 November. Many of his constituents, of course, would not have been able to read it themselves.

⁵⁵ Vindicator, 8 November 1834.

many Irish Protestants, had also employed gangs of Irish Catholic canal-diggers to disrupt their opponents.⁵⁶ After their defeat at the polls, the Tories were more determined than ever to pursue their own ends, and to consolidate the English, Scottish and Irish populations of the province behind their party.⁵⁷ It was a strategy which challenged O'Callaghan's ability to keep the Irish loyal to the patriote movement, and it should have been his primary goal during the succeeding months to thwart it. But he was to find himself too often occupied by province-wide reformist activities, and probably lost some of the influence he had once held over the Irish of Montreal. The Vindicator, meanwhile, which the Governor, Lord Aylmer, considered to be "distinguished for its low scurrility and abuse of the British Government,"⁵⁸ was at this time made the object of a sustained attack by the Tories in Quebec City. Consequently a meeting of that city's subscribers was held in support of the paper.⁵⁹

But in the spring of 1835 a new attempt was made in Quebec City to suppress O'Callaghan's paper, this time led by Father McMahon who also attacked the reform press in general. At a meeting in St. Patrick's Church it was suggested that the good doctor be consigned to the practice of medicine in Yamaska.⁶⁰ The Vindicator responded

⁵⁶ Wade, p. 145.

⁵⁷ Ibid. pp. 144-46; and Clark, p. 442-44.

⁵⁸ Aylmer to Spring Rice, 24 December 1834, Lower Canada, State Papers, 1834, Q 217-3: Report on Canadian Archives, 1899 (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1900), p. 823.

⁵⁹ Vindicator, 8 November 1834. A. Hennessy was the secretary.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 3 April 1835. See ibid., 7 April 1835, which is devoted to this attempt by Father McMahon and the Tories of Quebec City to undermine the liberal press, and the Vindicator in particular.

that "we look to the friends of a Free Press in Lower Canada for protection against this second base, cowardly, and uncalled for attack on our Independence."⁶¹ As a result, a meeting of patriotes was held in Quebec City which espoused the cause of the Vindicator and also established a Reform Association in the city.⁶² At the same time Le Canadien pronounced O'Callaghan's paper the best periodical journal in Lower Canada.⁶³

A new Tory newspaper was meanwhile being established in Montreal which aimed to cut into the Vindicator's circulation, and was not above spreading false rumours about the good doctor. Le Canadien reported early in 1835:

Le bruit ayant couru que le Dr. O'CALLAGHAN devait abandonner la direction du Vindicator, ce Monsieur répond que, "s'il peut en arriver du bien aux Tories de connaître son intention à cet égard, tout ce qu'il peut leur dire c'est qu'ils pourront nourrir cette espérance lorsque le Conseil sera électif--mais pas auparavant." Il paraît que ce bruit a été mis en circulation par les amis de l'Irish Advocate, dans la vue de nuire parmi les Irlandais à la circulation du Vindicator au profit de ce nouveau journal.⁶⁴

The editor of the Vindicator was now also a member of the Assembly and one of the leaders of the radical faction and as such he,

⁶¹ Ibid., 3 April 1835.

⁶² Le Canadien, 22 and 24 April 1835. The Vindicator reported on 12 May 1835 that Le Canadien had reported that McMahon's sermon was copied from one by an Irish apostate named Kerwan who became a Protestant minister (he had been a priest) and married. The original had been written during the religious troubles at the end of the last century.

⁶³ Le Canadien, 22 April 1835.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 2 January 1835.

Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine and Jean-Joseph Girouard visited Quebec City and Trois-Rivières late in 1834 to consult the newly elected members of the legislature about the forthcoming session.⁶⁵ When the Assembly met on 21 February 1835, Papineau was once again chosen Speaker with the support of an overwhelming majority.⁶⁶ Two days later O'Callaghan was one of the seven members voted to a committee to respond to the Speech from the Throne.⁶⁷ And on 28 February he was nominated to two committees: those of Public Accounts and Grievances.⁶⁸ These appointments would give him a powerful position from which to harass the government.

The radicals were in firm control of the house, their majority never falling below twenty-two and always including the new member from Yamaska.⁶⁹ Among the twenty-two non-French members there were eight definite Tories and five strong patriotes, while the remainder swung to and fro. It was only the rump of eight English-speaking Tory members which gave the Assembly any semblance of an ethnic split, since there is

⁶⁵ La Minerve, 4 December 1834.

⁶⁶ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835: 21 February 1835. The vote was 70 to 6.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 23 February 1835.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 28 February 1835.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

no evidence of any such polarization among the rest of the members.⁷⁰

The session was brief, lasting less than a month, but it gave O'Callaghan his first taste of parliamentary politics, and he would put his experience to good use later.

It was during this session of the Legislature that the Tories presented their "Constitutional" Petition which pledged loyalty to the continuance of the connection to the British crown, and complained that the Assembly was utilizing its powers "with a spirit of decided hostility to Your Majesty's Government, of disregard for the peace and welfare of the Province, and with ill disguised projects of exclusion and proscription against your Majesty's Subjects not of their national origin." In fact, the petition continued, "at the late General Election this spirit of exclusion and proscription has been carried to the extent, that although the population not of French origin, amounts to more than one fourth of the population, it has not been able to return more than fourteen Members of the choice of the Electors, or representing their views and interests, out of a House composed of eighty-eight Members, and that the whole of the population not of French origin in the Cities and Counties of Quebec and Montreal, although they nearly equal the French population in number, have not been able to return one Member

⁷⁰ Ibid. Baxter Bowman and James Blackburn of Ottawa, John G. Claphan of Megantic, B.C.A. Gudy and John Moore of Sherbrooke, William Power of Gaspé, Alphonso Wells of Shefford, and William Baker of Missisquoi formed the Tory clique. The patriotes included O'Callaghan, Robert Nelson, René-Joseph Kimber of Trois-Rivières, Jacob De Witt of Beauharnois and James Leslie of the east ward of Montreal.

of their choice, out of twelve."⁷¹ The petition went on to denounce the Ninety-two Resolutions and the committees formed and "tumultuous and riotous assemblies" held in support of them. It was the first major Tory salvo in the strategy they were now about to implement: emphasize ethnic differences and accuse the patriotes of disloyalty. Its purpose was simple: divide et impera. For they, and the government, were well aware of the danger posed to their dominion by the threat of a French-Irish alliance and well aware of the need to unite all the non-French elements of the population. Governor Aylmer commented that "a character of nationality has been given to the elections hitherto unknown in the province, so that a strongly marked separation has taken place between the British and Irish population on the one side and the Canadians of French origin on the other, and Constitutional Associations have been formed by the former, including most of the influential and talented men of the population. It is evident that a crisis in the affairs of Lower Canada is fast approaching."⁷² The support of the Irish was essential

⁷¹ Petition of Inhabitants of Lower Canada to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1835, PAC, MG24-B142. It continued: "This result, which in fact leaves a population having great and permanent interests in the Province, and contributing a very large proportion of the Public Revenue without even the power of being heard in the Legislature of the Country by any person of their choice or responsible to them, has been facilitated by an unjust and faulty distribution of the Elective franchise; by including the new and growing Settlements of persons not of French origin in Counties where their origin predominates, and where their votes are lost; and by the incessant and systematic efforts of the leading characters in the House of Assembly of French origin, to depress and vilify the population not of their origin, with a manifest tendency to subject their persons and property, and the whole Country, to the arbitrary rule and control of these characters, through the instrumentality of a majority acting and held together under the impulses of national prejudices and feelings."

⁷² Aylmer to Spring-Rice, 24 December 1834, Lower Canada, State Papers, 1834, Q 217-3: Report on Canadian Archives, 1899, p. 823.

to the political prospects of the Tories and the British authorities, but it had yet to be secured.

Rumours, in fact, of Irish-French collaboration were widespread among the English, as a letter of late 1834 makes clear:

A good deal of apprehension has existed in and about the City [Montreal] for sometime past, but which appears to be now abating, and I hope all will remain quiet. Whispers come from too many quarters however to render it doubtful that there is some foundation for alarm, and those least credulous will give the clique credit for their desire to produce a collision in the City, if not a rising in the country--There is no doubt of efforts having been made to awaken the fears of the Irish Catholics as well as the Canadian peasantry for the safety of their Religion and Religious Establishments, and it is not long since the Vindicator openly asserted that the Canadians would soon be called upon to do something more than pass resolutions....A great deal of excitement prevails in the Country, and I believe that nothing but the dread of defeat prevents a rising in the City.⁷³

The forces of authority must have been well aware of such rumours.

O'Callaghan acted as president of a celebration of St. Patrick's Day in Montreal on 17 March 1835 but it was indicative of the growing division within the Irish community that the Tory "Constitutionals" also gave dinners in Montreal and Quebec City in honor of the Hibernian saint.⁷⁴ Le Canadien fulminated: "On remarque qu'au Diner de la St. Patrice qui a eu lieu en cette ville dans l'ancien théâtre, on a omis de boire à Daniel O'Connell....Les vrais et bons Irlandais de cette

⁷³ Extract from a letter from Montreal, 24 December 1834, enclosed in Gillespie to the Secretary of State, London, 26 January 1835, in Clark, Movements, p. 283.

⁷⁴ La Minerve, 19 March 1835.

ville commencent à ouvrir les yeux, et Messieurs les 'Constitutionnels', gare à la prochaine élection."⁷⁵ But the Irish were being pulled in two directions, and both sides were doing their utmost to secure the support of the majority. Thus it was a blow to the Constitutionals, and one which the reformers trumpeted loudly, when O'Connell expressly refused to support their petition to the British House of Commons.⁷⁶

The growing division within the Irish community was also reflected in the rivalry between the Vindicator and its new competitor, the Irish Advocate. O'Callaghan dug his teeth savagely into his opponent's weakest spot, and stubbornly refused to relinquish his grasp. On 3 July he stated bluntly: "As for the existence of Orange principles in this town, the fact is verified by the columns of the Irish Advocate."⁷⁷ Only six weeks later the Vindicator repeated its message: "The Advocate [was] established in this city for the purpose of spreading Orangeism, and of gulling Irishmen."⁷⁸ Nor would the rest of the patriote press spare this instrument of Toryism. La Minerve suggested that its editor change the name of his paper to "L'Avocat des Orangistes."⁷⁹

It was crucial to the patriotes that O'Callaghan and his journal maintain their dominant influence among the Irish, and the doctor was certainly not about to do anything to undermine the Irish-French alliance upon which his hopes were based. Thus when the serious illness of

⁷⁵ Le Canadien, 23 March 1835.

⁷⁶ Vindicator, 18 August 1835.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 3 July 1835 (quoted in ibid., 18 August 1835).

⁷⁸ Vindicator, 18 August 1835.

⁷⁹ La Minerve, 18 May 1835.

his wife prevented him from attending the St. Jean Baptiste celebration, he wrote a letter of apology which concluded "St. Jean Baptiste et St. Patrick. Leur vie fut une vie de dévouement pour la cause de la Réforme. Puissent leurs enfants suivre leur digne et glorieux exemple et être toujours prêts à faire les plus grands efforts pour régénérer leur commune patrie."⁸⁰ Less than a month later, on 17 July, O'Callaghan's wife died.⁸¹ Her last wish was that their infant son, soon to follow her to the grave, be named Jean Baptiste.⁸²

Despite his personal loss, O'Callaghan continued his political and journalistic activities without abatement. In the same month as his wife's death he became one of the corresponding secretaries of the newly formed Reform Association and Patriotic Union of the District of Montreal, which was dedicated to the continued separation of Lower from Upper Canada; the control of the revenue by the Assembly; an elective legislative council; the abolition of monopolies, especially the Land Company; freedom of religion; a national system of education; and the establishment of a Post Office. Daniel O'Connell was named agent in Ireland, and William Lyon Mackenzie in Toronto.⁸³

The political climate after the elections of 1834 remained very warm, and O'Callaghan was a man who aroused powerful emotions in his opponents as well as his supporters. He would thus become the object of more than one attempt at physical intimidation during the next months.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 29 June 1835.

⁸¹ Monet, p. 555 and Guy, p. 8. She died of pulmonary disease, made worse by the premature birth of her child.

⁸² Monet, p. 555.

⁸³ Vindicator, July 1835.

The first occurred in December of 1834 when he was accosted on the steamer Canada, en route from Montreal to Quebec, by a party of Tory ruffians led by William Jones, a man connected with the recent murder of a reformer in Sorel. The doctor was subjected to a flood of insults and invective, and his life was even threatened by one of the party. No one came to his assistance, but O'Callaghan wisely ignored his tormenters--taking, in fact, no evident notice of them, according to the Vindicator.⁸⁴

The physical well-being of this Irish emigrant was put to yet another test in the summer of 1835 as the recently bereaved editor was set upon and physically brutalized by one of his political rivals within the Irish community, Andrew Doyle, a man whom the Vindicator characterized as a Tory ruffian, and who apparently believed he had been slandered by the newspaper. It reported:

...that inhuman brute rushed behind him, and, with the butt end of a hunting whip, heavily loaded with lead, struck him a dreadful blow on the temple, which stupefied him. In this helpless state he was left at the mercy of the villain, and before any person could interfere, seven or eight other blows, each causing a dreadful wound, were inflicted. The Doctor was conveyed to his own house in a truly dangerous state; and it was not until this morning that his medical friends considered him free from danger.⁸⁵

But personal danger could not deter the editor's pen nor alter his political philosophy.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 5 December 1834; Grey, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 25 August 1835. Doyle was later indicted for assault with intent to murder: La Minerve, 16 July 1835.

Once a Reform Association had been established in Montreal, O'Callaghan felt it was important that branches of it be set up in the other districts of the province.⁸⁶ But the association in Quebec City was apparently the subject of an attempt at subversion by the Tories. In September the Vindicator reported proudly that the "BRITISH and IRISH REFORMERS" had remained true to their principles despite the blandishments of the Tories, and that their

...firmness and patriotism are the more to be appreciated at the moment, on account of the powerful means resorted to, particularly in Quebec, to seduce them into an approval of the late administration. Appeals to their passions and prejudices are being made--the odious cry of national distinction of origin is raised and industriously propagated by the Presses devoted to the maintenance of Toryism, to stimulate the people to discord and violence. They have, however, signally failed in these guilty attempts.⁸⁷

At the meeting which inspired this editorial the British and Irish members of the Reform Association of Quebec had resolved:

That the painful condition of Ireland, produced by a course of unexampled and undeviating injustice and oppression, had compelled many of us to emigrate; and we all having made this province the land of our choice--the home of our children--the interests of the Canadian people must be our interest--we will therefore unite with them in every measure tending to secure our common rights, or to promote our common interests and happiness.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ See George Chandler et al. to L.-J. Papineau, 12 July 1835, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 1970-71. The reformers of Missisquoi wished Papineau to attend their inaugural meeting.

⁸⁷ Vindicator, 18 September 1835.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Despite O'Callaghan's efforts, it is evident that the Irish community was beginning to split and that the Tories were making every effort to monopolize the support of all the non-French segments of the population. It is also apparent that both sides were becoming increasingly desperate.

Both of these points had been exposed even more publicly in the pages of the Vindicator two weeks earlier in a long editorial by O'Callaghan. In it he contended that attempts were being made "to rouse a feeling of hatred in the minds of the persons dwelling in the townships against their French brethren" but that they were failing. Thus, O'Callaghan charged, during the last general election it "was attempted by the anti-liberals to make the division an English and French one," but the townships nonetheless had elected a number of reformers. Papineau, moreover, had been received with enthusiasm in Stanstead, a county in the Eastern Townships bordering on Vermont, which subsequently returned two of his adherents. In Montreal, furthermore, "the immense majority of the Irish" had voted for the reform leader, and all "the members returned have been warmly attached to the cause of the Assembly."⁸⁹ He therefore concluded:

The truth is, that the division of the people is not into English and French, but into friends of popular government, and friends of government by a small body of place-holders. This last party is contemptible as to numbers, and power over the people;

⁸⁹ Ibid., 4 September 1835.

their sole strength lies in the mischievous support of an ill-informed Colonial office situated in Downing Street. The former party comprehends almost all the French Canadians, and all such of the English as are unconnected with the official tribe. The richer merchants of Quebec and Montreal have joined the official party.⁹⁰

O'Callaghan also placed the "well-off gentry" in the ranks of the government party, but contended that the yeomanry of the Townships "side naturally with the people, without asking whether they be French or English." O'Callaghan also took note of the Tory newspapers' interest in the subject of annexation, remarking that they were motivated by fear of a French majority, not republicanism, in considering this option. He nevertheless commented favorably himself upon the benefits which would accrue to the province from such a change of allegiance.⁹¹

Aylmer was soon convinced that he could not work with the new Assembly, and that "unless the Imperial Parliament interferes," he was afraid "that the English speaking portion of the population will take the law into their own hands."⁹² And there were those within the administration who believed that a crisis was approaching, and that "without firmness on the part of the Imperial government a collision cannot long be delayed."⁹³ Some, in fact, were already arguing that "union of

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Aylmer to Hay, 14 March 1835, Lower Canada, State Papers, 1835, Q 221-2: Report on Canadian Archives, 1899, pp. 855-56. Some administrators also believed the English part of the population, which had more to complain of than the French, "must be protected...or they will be harder to deal with than the French." Gillespie to Glenelg, 9 May 1835, *ibid.*, p. 885.

⁹³ Gillespie to Aberdeen, 6 April 1835, *ibid.*, p. 884. See also Gould to Aberdeen, 16 January 1836, *ibid.*, p. 877.

the provinces is the remedy; the faction only gains strength by concession."⁹⁴ Under these circumstances, a new initiative was obviously needed--and a new governor, for Aylmer had become so unpopular with the reformers that he was incapable of effective government as the Assembly would not vote supply, forcing the imperial authorities to authorize him to pay the officers of the civil government from the military chest in 1835.⁹⁵ Aylmer had written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies: "To such extremity has the public service been driven, that I have, for some time past, been in daily expectation of a dissolution of the King's Government in the Province, from the want of means to carry on its ordinary operations."⁹⁶

Lord Gosford, the Irish peer sent over to replace Aylmer and to investigate the grievances of the province, arrived in Lower Canada during the summer of 1835. The British hoped that the new governor, a Whig who had been highly successful as governor of Armagh since 1832, would be able to conciliate the disaffected elements of the population. His success would depend largely on his ability to win the confidence of the more moderate patriotes. O'Callaghan was not one of these.

In the fall O'Callaghan published two editorials concerning Orangeism in Canada. The first compared the principles of Irish Orangeism to those of Canadian Toryism and concluded:

⁹⁴ Gould to Hay, 31 March 1834, *ibid.*, p. 833.

⁹⁵ Thomas Spring Rice to Lord Aylmer (despatch), Sessional Papers, 1835, 39: 271.

⁹⁶ Lord Aylmer to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, *ibid.*: 273.

The object of the Tory, or Constitutional party, in CANADA, is the same as that for which the Irish orange faction are contending:--The subserviency of the majority to the minority. The aggrandisement of the few at the expense of the many. In Ireland, it is called Protestant ascendancy--in Canada, it goes by the name of British Ascendancy. The means alone differ. Difference of creed is the shibboleth in IRELAND. Difference of language and origin is the bugbear in CANADA. Though the means differ, the end is the same: a desire of retaining political power by weakening, through division, the energies and the influence of the people, which were they united, would be irresistible.⁹⁷

But, O'Callaghan thundered, the tactic was not succeeding, since "thousands here, belong to the French party who speak not a word of the French language, in the same manner as the Catholics of Ireland have many sincere friends and supporters, who are, at the same time, staunch Protestants."⁹⁸ The other editorial commented on the presence of sworn Orangemen in the army units stationed in Canada and demanded: "We hope therefore that steps will, without any further quibble, be immediately taken to purify those Regiments which...have connexion with the Grand Orange Lodge."⁹⁹

O'Callaghan soon after called attention to another Tory ploy to divide and at the same time cement the support of the various English-speaking ethnic groups in the province. He wrote:

The Constitutionlists of this city carried out their "national origin" principles, in the course of last spring, by cutting up their followers into squads, and separating them into political parties or "societies," according to the country they, or their forefathers, came from. The Scotch Tories were parcelled out into a "St. Andrews Society"--the

⁹⁷ Vindicator, 6 October 1835.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

English Tories into a "St. George's Society"; the Irish Tories into a "St. Patrick's Society," and the German, Dutch and Flemish Tories into a "German Society." All this was done in order to be able, through these subdivisions, to move the whole Tory phalanxes, with ease, whenever required.¹⁰⁰

The heads of three of these four societies, the editor pointed out, were legislative councillors. O'Callaghan warned all reformers against the apparent intention to form a similar set of societies in Quebec City, heralded by the announcement by "that old schemer," John Neilson, of the formation of a "Quebec St. Andrew's Society." The editor was nevertheless a supporter of that other Irish ethnic organization, the Hibernian Benevolent Society, which advertised its monthly meetings in the pages of his newspaper, and was certainly willing to stress Irish ethnicity when it suited his purposes.¹⁰¹

During the fall of 1835 the Assembly had received a reinforcement of its steadfastness in the face of Gosford's blandishments: the Upper Canadian reformers had sent William Lyon MacKenzie and William John O'Grady to confer with their Lower Canadian colleagues and "to bring about a closer alliance between the Reformers in the two provinces."¹⁰² They visited the Assembly and were well received. Charles-Ovide

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 9 October 1835. The president of the St. Andrew's Society was the Hon. Peter McGill; of the St. George's Society, the Hon. George Moffatt; of the German Society, the Hon. Lewis Gagy; and of the St. Patrick's Society, John Donellan.

¹⁰¹ For example, see the Vindicator, 16 October 1835.

¹⁰² Charles Lindsey, The Life and Times of Wm. Lyon MacKenzie (Toronto: P.R. Randall, 1862, reprint ed., Toronto: Coles, 1971), 1: 350.

Perrault wrote to E.-R. Fabre: "Leurs plans de réforme sont vastes et méritent bien toute l'attention possible. Je crois que leur mission sera infiniment utile."¹⁰³

Cooperation between the reformers of Upper and Lower Canada was evidently increasing. In both provinces a People's Bank (Banque du Peuple in Lower Canada) had been established, whose purpose was to compensate for the favoritism shown by the banks to the great merchants of the towns--most of whom in Lower Canada were English, Scottish or American. And they were also concerned by corruption in the construction of such projects as the Welland Canal. During his visit Mackenzie attended meetings of committees on the canal and post office chaired by O'Callaghan.¹⁰⁴ The upshot was that many Tories began to see the doctor as the Mackenzie of Lower Canada. T.A. Stayner of the Post Office, who believed the French "tyrants" should be placed "in their proper position," was greatly upset by the questions put to him--at Mackenzie's instigation, he believed--by "the Chief Inquisitor," O'Callaghan.¹⁰⁵ Two weeks later he was still testifying and felt he could bear O'Callaghan's goading little longer: "The insulting manner in which I have been berated by Dr. O'Callaghan the Chairman of the Committee would scarcely be believed--He is the meanest Wretch that ever I had the misfortune to come in contact with."¹⁰⁶ Despite a quarrel which ensued.

¹⁰³ C.-O. Perrault to E.-R. Fabre, Quebec, 2 November 1835, ANQ.

¹⁰⁴ See Robert Rumilly, Papineau et son temps (Montreal: Fides, 1977), 1: 368-69.

¹⁰⁵ T.A. Stayner to John Macaulay, 27 November 1835, Macaulay Papers, Archives of Ontario, MS 78 (hereafter AO).

¹⁰⁶ T.A. Stayner to John Macaulay, 10 December 1835, *ibid.*

when Mackenzie demanded that O'Callaghan publish a thousand copies of his report on the Welland Canal, there seems no doubt that the reformers were making common cause.¹⁰⁷ In fact, when O'Callaghan later drew up a new Post Office Bill, Stayner believed it was the work of Mackenzie and would cause "confusion worse confounded."¹⁰⁸

It is evident from their desire for cooperation that Mackenzie and the reformers of Upper Canada believed that Papineau and his followers were devoted to the cause of liberal democracy, and not, as some of their opponents claimed, to the national independence of French Canada. Mackenzie wrote to John Neilson at this time that "the idea of a French Canadian state, province or republic controlling the St. Lawrence, and the commerce of the great countries situated on its borders is too absurd to be...credited."¹⁰⁹ He admitted that English-French relations within the province were not very warm, but believed it was probably "us who are to blame."¹¹⁰

Ironically, rivalry between the Montreal members and those from Quebec was at the same time undermining the solidarity of the reformers within the province. In a letter to E.-R. Fabre, Charles-Ovide Perrault complained that the Quebec members were jealous of those from

¹⁰⁷ Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 369-70.

¹⁰⁸ T.A. Stayner to John Macaulay, 21 December 1835, Macaulay Papers, AO, MS 78. It is evident that Tory officials such as Stayner were becoming desperate as his letter concluded that the English would soon have to leave the province, for "the French Canadians will not suffer us to remain amongst them except upon terms so degrading that no man who has any self respect for himself can submit to them." It is not surprising that he loathed the Francophile and radical O'Callaghan.

¹⁰⁹ W.L. Mackenzie to John Neilson, 18 November 1835, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

¹¹⁰ W.L. Mackenzie to John Neilson, 28 November 1835, *ibid.*

Montreal.¹¹¹ But the tensions went deeper. Many of the members from the Montreal region, including O'Callaghan, Perrault and LaFontaine as well as Papineau, were generally more radical than their Quebec colleagues, who were closer to the British authorities at the Castle.¹¹² This disagreement boded ill for a movement about to face a major crisis.

Towards the end of the year another rival to O'Callaghan's newspaper appeared in Montreal. This provoked a scathing comment from the Vindicator: "The first number of a new weekly paper, The True Briton, made its appearance in this city on Saturday. It is 'whole hog' Tory. We thought that there were already too many spoons in the Constitutional dish. It seems, however, starvation goes a great way with some people."¹¹³ At about the same time the new session of the legislature opened, one that was to prove dramatic. O'Callaghan was once again voted onto the Committee of Grievances, as well as that of Revenue and Finance.¹¹⁴ During the coming months he was to take a very active part in the proceedings, and to establish himself as Papineau's chief English-speaking lieutenant in the Assembly, as well as the leading representative of the Irish patriotes.

Early in the session, the doctor brought in two bills, one to provide "for the nomination and appointment of Parish and Town Officers within the Seigneuries and Townships of the province," the other to make the Salaries and Enrolments of Public Officers liable to attachment at

¹¹¹ C.-O. Perrault to E.-R. Fabre, Quebec, 19 November 1835.

¹¹² Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 246-47; Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 344.

¹¹³ Vindicator, 20 October 1835.

¹¹⁴ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835-36, 30 October 1835, p. 20.

the suit of their Creditors.¹¹⁵ Shortly thereafter he was appointed to a committee to consider a request from the President and Directors of the Welland Canal Company for more financial aid for the completion of the venture.¹¹⁶ And he moved that an address be presented to the Governor complaining about the appointment by the executive of Samuel Gale, "who was a decided partisan of the Administration of the Earl of Dalhousie, and the declared enemy of the Laws which he is sworn to administer," to the post of Judge of the King's Bench for the district of Montreal.¹¹⁷ And O'Callaghan was one of five members appointed to a committee to examine a petition of the Rev. Patrick McMahon for the incorporation of the congregation of English-speaking Roman Catholics of Quebec City.¹¹⁸ All of this had transpired within the first week of the session!

During the remainder of 1835 the radical majority never lost a vote in the Assembly, but on one vote early in December it was cut to eight.¹¹⁹ O'Callaghan was present for every recorded vote, and never deviated from his reformist principles. He was also appointed to a committee to examine the possibility of the establishment of a new

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 2 November, p. 30. The Assembly had already voted some funds for its construction: Ouellet, p. 260.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 31. It was seconded by C.-O. Perrault and carried 49 to 8.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 3 November, pp. 33-34.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 2 December, pp. 232-33. The vote was 33 to 25.

Public Square in Montreal,¹²⁰ and he presented petitions from the Inhabitants of the Parishes of St. David de Deguire and St. Michel d'Yamaska, and later the report of a commission for the improvement of navigation of the River Yamaska.¹²¹

Late in November he moved that the Committee of Grievances be instructed to enquire into the fate of the petition of the Assembly to the British Parliament on the state of the province in 1834.¹²² And a few days later he moved that the Public Accounts Committee investigate the disbursement of £31,000 in 1834 from the Military Chest to defray the expenses of 1833, and why the Receiver General and Commissioner of the Jesuits Estates always deducted their salaries before reporting their gross collections to the House.¹²³ All of this was part of the radical attack on Tory place-holders and on the attempts by the government to circumvent the Assembly's control of the revenue. At the same time O'Callaghan was also on a committee to investigate the educational situation in Missisquoi, on another looking into the condition of the Post Office, and acted as the reporter of the amendments of a committee of the whole house into the relief of various Societies for Protestants.¹²⁴ He was busy indeed!

But, having recovered from the vicious attack on his person by

¹²⁰ Ibid., 9 November, p. 93. On 25 November he acted as chairman of the Committee of the whole House to examine the question.

¹²¹ Ibid., 10 November, pp. 94, 98.

¹²² Ibid., 23 November, p. 190.

¹²³ Ibid., 30 November, p. 226.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 24 November, p. 196; 9 December, p. 255; and 4 December, pp. 239-41.

Doyle during the summer, the doctor was once again the intended victim of a physical beating. Early in the session a reporter from the Quebec Mercury named De Gaspé, angry at some remarks in the Vindicator about the inaccurate and biased nature of his reports of Assembly debates, lured him from the chamber by telling one of the messengers that someone wished to speak with him in the "wardrobe." Wisely refusing to go into the street with De Gaspé, O'Callaghan confronted him in a passageway where "De Gaspé then asked the Doctor if he were the author of the paragraph, which the latter denied." According to the Vindicator, the young Bravo thereupon flourished something like a whip, and threatened the Doctor with personal violence if he would come out, or the first time he would catch him in the streets, and stated that he was deterred from attacking the Honorable Member on the spot, by the fear of being sent to Jail."¹²⁵ A crowd had gathered by then, and O'Callaghan withdrew, pursued by his assailant who was hurling insults and threats at him. He was finally subdued by some of the messengers, and was later arrested for breach of privilege by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms and consigned to prison by a vote of the House.¹²⁶ The Vindicator commented acidly:

We hear from Quebec that there are strong reasons for the opinion that this recent attack on Dr. O'CALLAGHAN had its origin in the hatred which the Tory party there entertain against the principles and proceedings of that Gentleman. De Gaspé was but the tool, the cat's-paw, of some of the party...the young man was urged on by more cunning men to execute their vengeance on a man whose greatest crime is, that he uses all his talents to relieve his adopted country from the evils of misgovernment, and the fangs of a hungry and irresponsible oligarchy.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Vindicator, 13 November 1835.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* The vote was unanimous, with O'Callaghan abstaining.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

O'Callaghan was quite evidently considered a very objectionable man by his opponents, and a very dangerous one.

Certainly the Vindicator could be provocative. In the same issue which reported the attack on its editor, the newspaper ran a brief but devastating item listing various expenses incurred by Hamilton Merritt, president of the Welland Canal, and charged to the company. This list included payments for gloves, play tickets, a barber, watch repairs, beer, cigars, wine, handkerchiefs, a razor, gin, snuff, a shoemaker, a doctor; donations to the poor and to an actor, etc., and totalled about £100!¹²⁸ The article was entitled, "A Welland Canal 'Job'," and it is doubtful if Mr. Merritt was particularly fond of the editor after its publication, even if he had formally presented a petition to the Assembly on behalf of the company only ten days earlier. Merritt must have been concerned by O'Callaghan's attitude for the prospects of his request for financial aid.

By December 1835 the Constitutionals had decided to form a British Rifle Corps in Montreal. They ran advertisements in some newspapers calling for the raising of 800 men.¹²⁹ The Vindicator immediately called attention to the issue, and demanded that the authorities put a stop to these efforts, warning: "The overzealous would do well not to burn their fingers."¹³⁰ It also rejected the Herald's

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 15 December 1835.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 18 December 1835.

claim that the reformers were in "desperate fright," as they did, after all, outnumber the Tories ten to one. The proposed Rifle Corps, moreover, had been unable to muster more than 150 men at its first assembly. The patriotes were nonetheless concerned, and Papineau demanded that Gosford order its dissolution.¹³¹ The governor complied in January of 1836, for he was not anxious for vigilante Tories to provoke incidents when he was in the midst of his attempts at conciliation.¹³²

Late in the same year the Vindicator commented on the robust state of American industry and democracy, and compared it to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in Canada which O'Callaghan blamed on

...the withering curse of colonial misgovernment... a system which supports a few pampered, perfumed lordlings, who administer the government, not to advance the ends of good government, but for the exclusive advantage of themselves and their caste....Their incessant endeavour has been to pit one class of the people against the other, and by keeping them disunited, to perpetuate their own vampire sway. In Upper Canada, the U.S. Loyalists have been set on against the people of American descent. In this Province, they have constantly endeavoured to excite the prejudices of all classes against their brethren of French origin. Were the government administered by rulers of the people's choice, and responsible to themselves alone, these hateful distinctions would speedily vanish.¹³³

The last issue of the year contained a lengthy article entitled "Further

¹³¹ C.-O. Perrault to E.-R. Fabre, 14, 15 and 16 December 1835, ANQ.

¹³² Elinor Kyte Senior, Redcoats and Patriotes (Stittsville, Ontario: Canada's Wings, 1985), pp. 12-14.

¹³³ Vindicator, 18 December 1835.

exposure of Lord Aylmer's Conspiracy against the rights of the Assembly of this Province," which argued that it was that governor's administration which had done most to disaffect the people from their confidence in the British government.¹³⁴

Whatever the cause, there could be no doubt by the end of 1835 that the disaffection of many in Lower Canada was transferring itself rapidly from the realm of discontent to that of sedition. But O'Callaghan and his colleagues continued to sow, oblivious to the growing whirlwind which they must someday be prepared to reap. Their policy of French-Irish cooperation within the province was coming under increasing strain due to the arrival of new emigrants, the increasingly serious economic crisis, and the machinations of their Tory opponents. It was essential that the alliance which formed the organizational foundation of the reform cause in Lower Canada be cemented if its supporters were to have any hope of success. At the same time it was necessary that a definite line of action be decided upon and pursued, and that the possible results of such a policy be analyzed and anticipated. In fact, O'Callaghan, Papineau and the other leaders of the reform movement were to fail on both counts. The result, much aided and abetted by the Tories and the government itself, would be a hopeless rising and the death or exile of those whose attempt at constitutional revolution was characterized by a lack of foresight, organization and resolution.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 31 December 1835.

CHAPTER V

RADICAL

1836-1837

Near we behold a sovereign state,
From which no gulf divides,
In dignity, in power, and wealth,
Advance with noblest strides.

In prosperity, why revel they,
While sunk in sloth are we?
A distant throne here coldly rules,
There, 'tis the people free.

And must this servile state endure?
Must we in chains alone
Fettered to Europe's policy,
Through life ignobly moan?

Oh, no! a government at home,
AMERICA's proud right,
Must rouse these sleeping Colonies
From lethargy to light.

The Vindicator, 5 January 1836¹

With this hint at the need for independence, which O'Callaghan well knew the Americans had achieved only through violent revolution, the Vindicator greeted 1836. For the long drawn-out constitutional battle between the reformers and the government was escalating rapidly. It was a time for decision: the Assembly and the administration must resolve their differences within a context of compromise, or seek a new forum in which to plead their case. Many reformers remained hopeful that the British Parliament would grant the province some redress of its

¹ Vindicator, 5 January 1836.

grievances. If it did not, however, then it was becoming evident that some might wish to contest the issue in an arena where the sword would replace the word.

This chapter will follow O'Callaghan and the patriotes to the brink of rebellion. Beset by internal dissension, the patriotes came to realize that Lord Gosford's administration was not about to grant their major demands. When Lord John Russell introduced resolutions into the British House of Commons which negated all the reformers' hopes, it became evident, to both the patriotes and the British, that a trial of strength was imminent. Last minute attempts at conciliation failed, and the province hurtled towards its moment of truth. And the likelihood was that the ultimate confrontation would not be peaceful.

With the resumption of the Parliamentary session after the holiday adjournment, it became obvious that the Earl of Gosford had been able to convince many of the more moderate followers of Papineau that compromise was preferable to continued confrontation. Even O'Callaghan was at this time still quite sanguine of the chances of a peaceful settlement of the province's grievances in a satisfactory manner, and he had written E.-R. Fabre, the publisher of his newspaper, on 26 November:

It is, I believe certain that his Excellency Lord Gosford & Sir Geo. Gipps are in favour of an Elective Council. Sir Charles Grey is rather opposed to giving French Canadians so much power, but would have but little objection to give it to the Upper Canadians if they asked for it; if the latter once had it he thinks the Lower Canadians would have a better chance of getting it afterwards. This info. may I believe be relied on. At the same time it would be prudent not to state it in the newspaper because it would serve no good purpose. It would rather embarrass [sic] perhaps the gov. who I believe is favorably inclined towards Canada. God grant he

may not treat us as Lord Aylmer did.²

But while the Irishman remained adamant as to the demands of the Assembly, many of the more moderate members would seem to have wavered. As a result, the radical majority in the House of Assembly dwindled dramatically. In the four division votes during January, the radical majority varied from a high of four to a low of one.³

Yet Gosford had not been able to make a very favorable impression on Papineau--something which would have all but assured his success. The patriote leader quickly concluded that "Milord est un homme faible quoiqu'à bonnes intentions--Mais l'Enfer est pavé de ces bonnes intentions."⁴ Papineau, in effect, felt he could not rely on the new governor. Charles-Ovide Perrault had concluded only six months after Gosford's arrival: "Ce pauvre Lord Gosford doit passer de vilains quarts d'heure par le tems qui court. On ne croit plus à sa sincérité, car il a fait trop de diplomatie et les honnêtes gens n'aiment pas les voies détournées.--M. Papineau a cessé de l'aller voir."⁵

² O'Callaghan to E.-R. Fabre, 26 November 1835: Fabre Papers, PAC, MG24-B127, pp. 2-3.

³ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835-36. The votes were: 8 January 1836 (p. 342), 30 to 26; 11 January (p. 346), 27 to 26; 25 January (pp. 391-2), 29 to 28; 26 January (p. 395), 31 to 28. O'Callaghan always voted in the majority.

⁴ C.-O. Perrault to E.-R. Fabre, Quebec, 30 January 1836, ANQ. The typescript of the letter in the ANQ is actually dated 30 January 1835, but, since the letter refers repeatedly to the presence of Lord Gosford in Quebec, and since he did not arrive there until August 1835, the date must be in error. I have therefore concluded that 1836 must be the correct dating. See Peter Burroughs, The Canadian Crisis and British Colonial Policy (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 74; MDCB, pp. 29, 305; and Henry J. Morgan, Sketches of Celebrated Canadians (Quebec: Hunter, Rose, 1862), p. 319.

⁵ C.-O. Perrault to E.-R. Fabre, 15 February 1835, ANQ.

During this period O'Callaghan was working on the fourth and fifth reports of the Committee of Grievances, which he presented to the House on 29 January and 5 February 1836, respectively. The former represented the high point of O'Callaghan's parliamentary career, as, in prose unmistakably that of the editor of the Vindicator and chairman of the committee, it concluded:

That Matthew Whitworth, Lord Aylmer, late Governor in Chief of this Province, has grossly abused the authority and trust reposed in him by the King, his master, and been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors,

That he has attempted at sundry times, to destroy the constitutional and inherent privileges of the Representative Branch of the Legislature of this Province.

That he has, by wicked and evil Counsel, attempted to mislead, and actually did mislead, the Servants of the Crown on matters touching the welfare of this Province, and the rights and liberties of the good People thereof, thereby endangering the safety and connexion of this Colony as a dependency of the British Crown.⁶

Only days after the fierce indictment of Aylmer came the fifth report which called for the removal from office of Samuel Gale, who had recently been appointed to the King's Bench, and who had previously been "an active and decided partizan of the obnoxious Administration of the Earl of Dalhousie."⁷

These reports, with their swelling rhetoric, must have helped

⁶ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835-36, Appendix EE: "FOURTH REPORT of the Standing Committee of Grievances," Appendix EE, 29 January 1836.

⁷ Ibid.: "FIFTH REPORT of the Standing Committee of Grievances," 5 February 1836.

rally the courage of the moderates, perhaps disturbed by the wearing of homespun garments by the radical deputies at the beginning of the new year--O'Callaghan's garb was particularly outstanding⁸--as must the oratory with which the Irishman presented them to the House. For this perfectly bilingual speaker, despite his lack of physical stature, was a passionate orator who left his listeners spellbound.⁹ But on 18 February, for the first time in his career, O'Callaghan voted in the minority with a small group of die-hard radicals.¹⁰

O'Callaghan had taken another step of significance during the month when he had proposed to a Committee of the whole House certain resolutions in light of the speech made by Sir John Colborne, Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, at the opening of the Parliament of that province. These resolutions called for the swift granting of the reforms demanded by the people, including an Executive Council responsible to the Representatives of the People, an elected Legislative Council, control of the revenue by the Assembly and the abolition of pluralities in government offices.¹¹ The Irishman would, years later, make a rather startling confession to Papineau as to his true feelings about the sup-

⁸ Monet, p. 555. Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 456 states that his attire was second only to that of Rodier. He lost out, apparently, because he wore a shirt and his glasses.

⁹ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835-36. The recorded votes during the month were: 13 February (p. 447), 53 to 24 and 46 to 24; 15 February (pp. 462 and 473), 40 to 21 and 62 to 2; and 26 February (p. 585), 40 to 27 and 55 to 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., 18 February, p. 488. The vote was 40 to 9 in the affirmative on some amendments by the Legislative Council to a Bill for the summary trial of some causes. Those who voted with O'Callaghan were Dr. C. Côté, C.-C. de Bleury, Jacob De Witt, Charles Drolet, R.-J. Kimber, D.-B. Viger, Knight and Grannis.

¹¹ Vindicator, 16 February 1836.

port he exhibited during these months for "responsible government," a concept to which the Lower Canadian radicals were persuaded by those of the neighboring province. In a letter of 1844 he wrote:

I must confess I looked with strong feelings of prejudice at the movement which the Reformers of Upper Canada forced on us of Lower Canada in 1835, ⁶ in favor of their peculiar hobby "Responsible Government," which I felt strongly inclined to, at that time, but abstained from doing for the sake of harmony. The clashing which has arisen between the Metropolitan and the Colonial pretensions I fancied I foresaw, though it is useless now to look back. ¹²

The proposal nonetheless became an integral part of the political program of the reformers of Lower Canada.

On 4 March O'Callaghan moved in the House that an address be presented to the Governor requesting that Samuel Gale be removed as a Judge of King's Bench. ¹³ This was easily carried, but Gale retained his position. And the radical majority was once again becoming precarious. In three votes recorded on 2 March the radical margin in the Assembly varied from a high of twenty to a low of eight. ¹⁴ And three days later, O'Callaghan twice voted with a small minority on an amendment to reduce the sum to be granted the government for the completion

¹² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, 3: 3831-34.

¹³ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1835-36, 4 March, pp. 639-40.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2 March, pp. 622-23.

of the Chambly Canal.¹⁵ The Irishman was an uncompromising opponent of the administration and of the clique of gentlemen and business interests which supported it. He was, in effect, irreconcilable to a regime which he had been born to loathe with every fibre of his being. Thus on 4 March he proposed that a list of bills rejected or altered by the Legislative Council during the session be prepared.¹⁶ When the Council rejected this proposal, O'Callaghan proceeded to prepare the list himself and published it with a long explanatory essay as a pamphlet which he dedicated to John Arthur Roebuck, M.P., agent in Britain of the Lower Canadian Assembly.

In the pamphlet he noted that the Assembly had introduced 117 bills and received six from the Legislative Council during the session; that its fifteen permanent committees had produced sixty-two reports, and 111 special committees had churned out 104. All of this indicated the great industry of a body in which no more than sixty members were in regular attendance. But half of their work had been destroyed by the Legislative Council, which had rejected, among others, a Quarantine Bill, three bills to extend and continue Municipal Laws, including the incorporations of Montreal and Quebec City, bills to complete the Chambly Canal and the improvement of Montreal Harbour, to promote education (resulting in the closing of 1,500 schools on 15 May and the consequent lack of facilities for 40,000 children), to allow the Townships to

¹⁵ Ibid., 5 March, p. 650. The amendment suggested a reduction from £28,000 to £22,000. Those voting with O'Callaghan on the amendment were: Blackburn, Cazeau, Côté, De Witt, Pierre Antoine Dorion, Fortin, Hébert and Perrault. When the unamended bill was then put to the vote, Blackburn and Dorion went over to the majority. The tallies were 37 to 9 and 39 to 7.

¹⁶ Ibid., 4 March, p. 643.

manage their own affairs, to repair highways and bridges, to attach the salaries of government officials in debt, to regulate the notarial profession, to maintain the courthouses and jails, to reprint the Provincial Statutes, to regulate the management of the Jesuits' Estates, to print and distribute the laws, to establish a post office, to reduce and fix the salaries of certain officers of the law and to limit the number of passengers in ships, and had amended others in a fashion detrimental to the common good.¹⁷

In its attitude to religious communities, O'Callaghan accused the Council of showing excessive favour to the Church of England, and called its members, among other epithets, "hypocrites" and "Irresponsible Legislators."¹⁸ He noted that of the bills delivered to the Legislative Council by the Assembly since 1822, no less than 216 had been rejected, and eighty-six others amended.¹⁹ A change was desperately needed and "the determination is now taken, that no public business will again be transacted with that Legislative Council until it is radically remodelled and changed."²⁰ He concluded:

Against conduct so oppressive..., so ruinous to the improvement of the country, and so utterly incompatible with good Government, there is no protection but a change in the CONSTITUTION of the Body

¹⁷ [E.B. O'Callaghan], The Late Session of the Provincial Parliament of Lower Canada by an Old Countryman (Montreal: n.p., 1836), pp. 3-27; the Lande Collection, McLennan Library, McGill University: S 1705.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 10, 24, 27. O'Callaghan also ironically quoted John Neilson who in 1827 had called the Legislative Councillors "public enemies" (p. 4).

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁰ Ibid.

which has so wantonly abused its power, and exercised it, not for the advantage of the community, but as the means of perpetuating public mischief....The only means which remains to uproot that system is to render that Council ELECTIVE.²¹

The author had earlier published an abridged version of this pamphlet as an editorial in the Vindicator.²² To the government he was a thorn that was becoming increasingly annoying, even in the paw of a lion.

O'Callaghan had by now become one of the most important patriotes in the Assembly. But he was also trying to maintain his position within the Irish community early in 1836. The Société Irlandaise de Bienfaisance de St. Patrick of Quebec City declared its continued support for "la grande question de réforme en cette province dont le Dr. O'Callaghan est l'habile, l'éloquent et l'inébranlable avocat."²³ And when the Hibernian Benevolent Society of Montreal held its annual meeting in February O'Callaghan was once again elected president. The Vindicator commented:

We understand that over forty members of the Society were present. It is very creditable to that honourable and old benevolent Society, that only three votes were given against the re-election of their worthy President, Dr. O'Callaghan. This proof of the confidence of his fellow countrymen shows that notwithstanding the constant assaults of a violent Orange Tory Press against him, the confidence of the Irishmen of Montreal is too firmly placed to be swayed by such malicious efforts.²⁴

²¹ Ibid.

²² Vindicator, 4 April 1836.

²³ La Minerve, 21 January 1836.

²⁴ Vindicator, 19 February 1836.

But Tory efforts to woo the Irish were continuing unabated, and O'Callaghan was certainly not in a secure position.

March witnessed a good deal of activity within the Irish community, especially in Quebec City where five Anglican ministers denounced the plan of the St. Patrick's, St. George's and St. Andrew's Societies to attend the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in the Catholic Church of the same name, calling the followers of the Roman rite "idolators".²⁵ Le Canadien justifiably heralded this as "BIGOTISME! INTOLERANCE!!"²⁶ This by no means dampened the spirit of the festivities and O'Callaghan himself attended the Quebec events, during which Father McMahon denounced the Protestant circular.²⁷ He was unable therefore to participate in the equally raucous and radical celebration held in Montreal, which featured a toast to "Doctor O'CALLAGHAN, and the Hiberian Benevolent Society of Montreal."²⁸ Le Canadien, not content to let the matter drop, declared that many French Canadians felt the same about the Anglican missive as did their Irish co-religionists.²⁹ The issue certainly stressed religion over language, and must have enraged some Tories when it arose, for, while they might harbour such thoughts, they were surely anxious to keep them quiet in their attempt to lure Irish support to their cause.

O'Callaghan was not the only controversial figure within the

²⁵ Le Canadien, 16 March 1836.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Vindicator, 29 March 1836; Le Canadien, 18 March 1836.

²⁸ Vindicator, 22 March 1836.

²⁹ Le Canadien, 18 March 1836.

Irish community. In Quebec City Father McMahon came under a good deal of criticism from some Irish who published a personal attack on him in Le Canadien. A general assembly of the congregation of St. Patrick's Church had to be called to express its support and veneration for their pastor. Le Canadien, meanwhile, remarked upon its approbation for a pamphlet entitled "Un Réformiste Irlandais" and commented that the Irish reformers were to be congratulated for their zeal, and that their support must not be rejected. Moreover, it was essential to do everything possible to cement "cette union si nécessaire à la cause commune, et que nos ennemis politiques ne cessent de vouloir rompre."³⁰ Shortly thereafter La Minerve denounced the St. Patrick's Society as an Orange front, and heralded the proposed establishment of an association of Irish democrats in the city so as to unify their efforts "pour s'opposer aux jeux à l'oppression dont ils ont tant eu à souffrir dans leur infortunée patrie."³¹ No more was to be heard of this nascent group, however, which seems to bear the unmistakable imprint of O'Callaghan.

The moderates were evidently on the ascendant in the Assembly when unexpectedly Governor Bond Head of Upper Canada revealed his instructions from the British ministry--instructions similar to Lord Gosford's. They were, quite simply, to concede nothing essential. This revitalized the radicals and provoked a series of reform meetings across the province during the summer of 1836.³²

³⁰ Ibid., 25 April 1836.

³¹ La Minerve, 5 May 1836. It was to be called the "Association Irlandaise Démocrates de Montréal."

³² See appendix J. The total predominance of Canadiens at these meetings is not surprising when one considers the overwhelming majority they formed in all of these counties except Missisquoi.

Gosford, who already seemed insincere to many reformers, had been rendered a mortal blow, for even many of the more moderate patriotes felt angry and betrayed, and would no longer repose any trust in the governor. Admittedly, it seems highly unlikely that he would have been able both to follow his instructions and to reach a compromise with Papineau. He had been placed in a predicament much like that of Lord Fitzwilliam in Ireland in 1795, and could but choose to exceed his instructions and face repudiation, or to fail. Still, Bond Head's revelation ended whatever meagre chance he had had of success.

The patriotes were unified by this evidence of British recalcitrance and dishonesty, and the Tories temporarily decided to lie low, however pleased they may have been privately. When a by-election was called in Trois-Rivières, the Irish patriote R.-J. Kimber wrote to Ludger Duvernay that the battle there could not be compared to Tracey's fight against a Bureaucrat in Montreal: "ici ce serait tous des Patriotes."³³ The government, however, was determined to maintain its authority, and when La Minerve exceeded its tolerance of criticism, Duvernay was once again tossed into prison late in the summer. A subscription for his benefit raised almost £37 in Montreal and Longueuil from 211 donors, 191 of them French Canadians, but including such prominent English-speaking reformers as Jacob De Witt, John Donegan, Peter Dunn, Robert Nelson and O'Callaghan (who contributed £2,10).³⁴

The Vindicator continued throughout the summer of 1836 to rouse the

³³ R.J. Kimber to Ludger Duvernay, 17 June 1836: Duvernay Papers, PAC. MG24-C3, 2: 737.

³⁴ "Souscription pour indemniser M. Ludger Duvernay, propriétaire de la Minerve," Montreal, 15 September 1836 and Longueuil, 15 November 1836: Duvernay Papers, PAC, MG24-C3, 2: 753-60.

radicals and hurl its defiance at the government. It editorialized in July that until reforms were granted "the people of Lower Canada will find it the most prudent part to withhold, as yet, all confidence from the present government."³⁵ Irish events and, in particular, O'Connell's utterances were followed closely as usual, and the Orangemen of Upper Canada and their allies, the Catholic hierarchy, were fiercely attacked.³⁶

Late in September a special Session of the Legislative Assembly was convened to clarify, at the British government's request, its demands made in the previous session. O'Callaghan was appointed to a committee to examine the form of government in the province, and the rôle of the Legislative Council.³⁷ In the end the Assembly stood by its address of the previous session with a strong majority, including O'Callaghan. There was, in fact, virtually no opposition left in the House--a mere rump.³⁸ The Vindicator commented:

'In the same demands, in the same declaration, particularly in the demand for an elective Legislative Council', the Representatives of this Province persist by a vote of 58 to 6. The change demanded in the Constitution of the Legislative Council can no longer be staved off, in the face of that majority. The machine of Government is arrested; the Representatives of the Country have decidedly pledged themselves not to lend their aid to the working of that machine, until that branch of the Legisla-

³⁵ Vindicator, 9 July 1836.

³⁶ See Senior, Orangeism: The Canadian Phase, pp. 28-29.

³⁷ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal, 1836, 27 September, p. 128.

³⁸ Ibid., 30 September 1836, p. 140. The crucial vote was 58 to 6. The two other recorded votes of the session were 54 to 9 and 57 to 6.

ture be altered.³⁹

A total impasse had been reached. Like England itself two hundred years earlier, the government was being denied revenue by the elected legislature unless it granted reforms, which the administration was unwilling to do. Conciliation, revolution or coercion: these were, in fact, the only three options left, and the latter two, both of which necessarily involved violence, were by far the most likely by the fall of 1836.

The Tories had also lost faith in Gosford and they convened a second meeting of the "Convention" in October to demand his recall. O'Callaghan labelled this the "SECOND EDITION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL FARCE."⁴⁰ But the Tory cause suffered a setback shortly thereafter when the Irish Advocate was forced to cease publication. The Vindicator gloated that the paper had been established in 1834 "by a small knot of plotting Tories and disappointed politicians under the expectation of worming themselves into influence, by obtaining and abusing the confidence of the Irish portion of the population, and of ultimately detaching our countrymen from the ranks of reform."⁴¹ But the Irish had not fallen for the sham, according to O'Callaghan. Rather they had viewed agents of the newspaper with suspicion, and had even "booted" them out of their neighborhoods "if they attempted to aid in circulating the paper." Nor could anyone be found to deliver the paper from the post-office, "so great was the horror of the unclean thing." The fear of what might befall anyone audacious enough to follow such a course may also have played its part.

³⁹ Vindicator, 4 October 1836.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 18 October 1836.

⁴¹ Ibid., 4 November 1836.

Whatever the cause, the Tories did have trouble in circulating the newspaper, and took to distributing it door to door without charge in Montreal and Quebec City. But not even that drastic measure could "find converts" for it, and the Vindicator, well-satisfied, proclaimed: "A spirit so truly Irish and patriotic as this, was too strong either for Tory gold, Tory fallacies, or Tory flattery; and the speculators on Irishmen were obliged to abandon their monster, after an outlay of, it is said, £1,700."⁴² O'Callaghan hoped the Tories would learn their lesson and cease their efforts to "detach" the Irish from the cause of reform, for "to make Tories of true hearted IRISHMEN is impossible."⁴³ As the Tories may already have realized, though, the time for words was almost past.

The Vindicator greeted 1837 with a belligerent gust of Celtic lyricism:

IRELAND! thine is a bitter fate;
Thy long, long years of woe
Will soften not your Tyrant's hate,
Until you 'strike the blow'⁴⁴

During the winter it lauded the American system of government, and noted the failure of the Tories in Quebec City, who had established there a St. Patrick's Lodge in an effort to "convert, i.e., to gull, our honest countrymen into an abandonment of the principles of their forefathers," but which had never been able to muster its quorum of twenty-five and

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 3 January 1837.

had just reduced it to nine.⁴⁵ O'Callaghan also reiterated his democratic principles by running a poem entitled "The Lower Orders," which stated in part:

How various and innumerable
Are those who live upon the rabble!
'Tis they maintain the Church and State
Employ the priest and magistrate.⁴⁶

The Vindicator continued to demand an elective Legislative Council, control of the whole revenue by the representatives of the people, and judges responsible to the Provincial Legislature, not the King.⁴⁷ It was, moreover, disappointed with Gosford who had been so successful in appeasing Armagh when he had been governor there, and who had promised so much but delivered so little.⁴⁸

The release of the long-awaited report of Gosford's commission gave the Vindicator new ammunition. On 4 April it commented:

...it is manifest from the whole tenor of the observations, that procuring money was the main object of their visit to this country. The grievances of the Province were of very little consideration...at the same time, we meet, over and over again, with the most striking evidence of the deep-rooted prejudices with [sic] which the several Commissioners entertain against French Canadians, on account of their origin.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Ibid., 28 February and 17 March 1837.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 17 March 1837.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 24 March 1837.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 4 April 1837.

The editorial went on to say that "They could hardly be more prejudiced against Negroes," and that the British would prefer to force the French Canadians to revolt rather than grant their just demands and have to suppress an English rebellion.

Then came the thunderbolt: Russell's Resolutions in the British Parliament rejected all the patriote demands and authorized the colonial government to pay arrears in civil service salaries without the Assembly's consent.⁵⁰ On 14 April the Vindicator reported the comment of the London Constitutional of 7 March: "Have Ministers forgotten the inglorious American war?"⁵¹ And on 21 April O'Callaghan trumpeted:

Hurrah for Agitation!

It gives us great pleasure to announce, that the feeling created throughout this wealthy and populous district, by Lord John Russell's infamous resolutions, is one of unmixed indignation. They are met every where with...a fixed, stubborn determination, to resist any and every attempt to enslave the country.

Henceforth, there must be no peace in the Province, no quarter for the plunderers. Agitate! Agitate! AGITATE!!! Destroy the Revenue: denounce the oppressors, Every thing is lawful when our fundamental liberties are in danger. 'The guards die; they never surrender!'⁵²

This was indeed a call to action, if not to arms. And on 28 April, the Vindicator issued what could be seen as a defense of customary practice, or as a threat:

⁵⁰ Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 273.

⁵¹ Vindicator, 14 April 1837.

⁵² Ibid., 21 April 1837.

The resolutions proposed in the House of Commons on the 6th of March, are a mere repetition of the unconstitutional doctrines which brought Charles the First to the Block; which drove James the Second into exile; they are the doctrines which called up the resistance of the old colonies, in 1765 and 1767; which led to the American Revolution and terminated in the Independence of the United States; they tyrannically dispose of the people's money without their constitutionally-expressed consent.⁵³

Russell's Resolutions made a constitutional settlement of the grievances of the Lower Canadian Reformers virtually impossible.

Whether it was their intention or not, there is no doubt that they were, in the most literal sense of the word, provocative of a violent attempt by the radicals to overthrow a system which they must now view as not only oppressive, but openly repressive of their rights. In effect, the concept that the colonial constitution of the Province could be peacefully altered had been shown to be illusory, or at least premature. Few patriotes would any longer believe that their demands could be achieved under present circumstances.

During the succeeding months, despite one attempt by the British to avert an open confrontation if the moderates could gain a majority in the Assembly, both sides hurtled towards collision. And in this case the authorities were always confident that their force would be quite irresistible to the very poorly moored object of patriote resistance. For with the continuing erosion of radical support due to internal doubts and divisions encouraged by the government and its Tory allies, the initiative was clearly passing to the administration. And the latter, it was quite clear, was no longer willing to tolerate the impasse which had developed.

⁵³ Ibid., 28 April 1837.

In the interests of a peaceful settlement, the English authorities might well have agreed to some tokens among the reforms long demanded by the Assembly, and they were quite willing to compromise on certain issues in order to appease moderates and thus sow dissension among the opposition ranks, but they were also by the late spring of 1837 intent on ending what they deemed to be the virtual control of the Province by its recalcitrant Assembly. Whatever settlement was reached must include measures which would make it impossible for Papineau and his allies ever again to paralyse the government, and even threaten the security of the province. In terms of power, it was no longer a question of how much the reformers would gain, but of what scraps they would be allowed to retain.

The authorities were well aware that the passage of Russell's Resolutions was a grave step, but the Earl of Gosford, at least, remained relatively optimistic. Early in March he wrote to Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary:

A feeling of dissatisfaction with the Assembly, in regard to its proceedings in the last short session, is spreading, but not gone to such an extent as to induce me to suppose that a dissolution at this moment would be desirable; but if an appeal was now made to the people, I am sure what is termed the majority in the Assembly would experience a diminution in their ranks; but, under existing circumstances, I see no positive substantial good to result from a dissolution. Recourse might be had to such a measure when you have determined on the line you mean to adopt for relieving the Province from its present state of embarrassment. Coercion, abruptly adopted, might prove fatal and such a step is therefore to be deprecated, nor can it be justified, except as a dernier ressort after all attempts

of a constitutional character shall have failed.⁵⁴

But the possibility of violence was certainly not overlooked, for later in the month Glenelg notified the governor that he could not provide the two regiments promised, which represented a formidable force in the context of the time and place, but that there were 2,000 - 3,000 men in the Maritime Provinces who could be placed at his disposal in an emergency.⁵⁵ A month later Gosford reiterated his apparent calm: "I see no chance whatever of any serious commotion here in consequence of your proceedings; however, you may rely on my taking every precaution. As to armed resistance, I see no ground for apprehending any thing of the kind."⁵⁶ Nonetheless at the same time he instructed Sir John Colborne to keep one regiment in Montreal to be used "immediately" in case of trouble.⁵⁷

While the patriotes were convinced by the passage of Russell's Resolutions that more drastic action was now necessary to effect any substantive alteration in the constitution of the province, the moderates remained anxious to seek some accommodation with the government. The latter were, therefore, susceptible not only to the arguments of the

⁵⁴ Lord Gosford to Lord Glenelg, 8 March 1837: Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 324.

⁵⁵ Glenelg to Gosford, 22 March 1837: *ibid.* He enclosed a note to Sir Colin Campbell which read: "I have his Majesty's commands to desire that you will immediately comply with any requisition which may be addressed to you by the Earl of Gosford, for detaching to his assistance any of his Majesty's Troops under your command in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick or Prince Edward Island."

⁵⁶ Gosford to Glenelg, 18 April 1837: *ibid.*, p. 329. Also in Colonial Office, Q Series, PAC, MG II, 1: 688.

⁵⁷ Gosford to Glenelg, 18 April 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, p. 329. Also in Colonial Office, Q Series, PAC, MG II, 1: 695-96.

administration, but in many cases were also not above accepting offices, or favours from the Crown which could only, as in the Irish Parliament prior to its final dissolution in 1800, prejudice the recipients into a more conciliatory view of imperial policy.

O'Callaghan was engaged in the greatest political battle of his life, and it was one which would soon call into question even his physical survival. He must have been aware that he was losing his grip on the Irish community which was wavering more and more noticeably as the moment of crisis approached, and that the support of at least a strong and unified majority of the Irish of Montreal was essential to the patriote cause. This is not to imply that it was the lack of this support which was the only factor that doomed the rebels of 1837 to defeat, but it was an important one. The editor of the Vindicator certainly had to have been cognizant of the crucial nature of that support. It must therefore be a measure of his overconfidence in Hibernian fortitude, or of his despair of any effective movement in Montreal with its British garrison, or of the desperate need for his oratorical skills to rouse the Canadien populace, that he spent so much of his time during the summer of 1837 outside of Montreal. In fact, neither O'Callaghan nor Papineau himself was a man suited to a situation which no longer called for political skill and eloquence, but ruthlessness and a cool head. Both men would, in fact, fall easy prey to the snares set by their adversaries and would then cut rather unimposing figures when guns momentarily and quite decisively replaced words.

Late in April Glenelg indicated that the composition of the Executive and Legislative Councils was now to be changed, although he had hoped this could have been effected as part of a more far-reaching set-

tiement.⁵⁸ But Gosford was aware that minor concessions would fail to satisfy the more radical element in the Assembly, and he wrote to Glenelg: "I have communicated to Sir John Colborne my wish to have a regiment always stationed at Montreal; but I have not the least expectation of any thing serious. If a dissolution of the present Parliament were to take place, there might be some broken heads, but nothing in the shape of general or combined commotion."⁵⁹ There was little doubt of the gravity of the situation. The Assembly had refused to vote the government supply, and the political forces were at an impasse. On 15 May the banks of Lower Canada, except the Banque du Peuple, responded to the financial crisis, and the collapse of some American banks, by suspending payment in specie.⁶⁰

While the destiny of his new homeland hung in the balance of imperial policy, O'Callaghan had to concern himself with events both local and international. His interest in Ireland had certainly not subsided, and early in March the Vindicator noted: "The poor of various parts of Ireland are in a most appalling [sic] state in consequence of the inclemency of the late weather, superadded to the failure of the potato crop."⁶¹ As for the Irish of the province, he and the other radicals continued their efforts to maintain a solid front. Thus in late May a meeting of "Irish and British reformers" was held at Quebec City. About 250 or 300 were present, mostly of the "mechanic and operative class." They agreed to form the Irish and British Reform and

⁵⁸ Glenelg to Gosford, 29 April 1837: Sessional Papers, 1837-38, pp. 325-26.

⁵⁹ Gosford to Glenelg, 6 May 1837: *ibid.*, p. 329.

⁶⁰ Quebec Gazette, 15 May 1837.

⁶¹ Vindicator, 7 March 1837.

Self-Protecting Association, and applauded O'Connell's stated "contempt" for the Irish of Lower Canada who had forgotten "the wrongs and sufferings of their native land" and had "leagued with a party here whose conduct and exertions inevitably tend to produce the same unfortunate condition of things in Canada."⁶² It was crucial to the patriote movement that the majority support of the Irish be kept secure and even augmented for, as Professor S.D. Clark has pointed out, the Irish presence in the reform movement deemphasized its national characteristics, and made it more "urban lower class" and Catholic.⁶³ Without them, the movement was almost exclusively French-Canadian and rural, and just as incapable of a successful revolution as the peasant Defenders of Ireland in 1798.

But it was not only the Irish who were meeting to denounce Russell's Resolutions and support the cause of reform. Early in May a meeting was held in Richelieu county, for instance, and another at St. Laurent in the middle of the month which was addressed by Papineau. The success of these meetings was, however, contested by Gosford who wrote to the Colonial Secretary, that, despite being held outside churches on a Sunday or holy day, when people would naturally be in great numbers, the crowds had been poor:

...the numbers at the meeting of the county of Richelieu, including men, women, and children, fell very short, I am informed, of the statement in the

⁶² Ibid., 23 May 1837. It is interesting to note though that O'Connell's attitude towards Canada's struggle for greater freedom was at this time quite conservative, which appalled many English radicals: see Robert Kee, The Green Flag (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972), p. 191.

⁶³ Clark, p. 326.

Vindicator, viz., "upwards of 1200 freeholders," and the numbers at St. Laurent assembly, stated on the same authority to exceed 700, did not, from the accounts I have received from various quarters, exceed, including all descriptions of persons, 300 individuals, which is the more remarkable from the meeting being held in the most populous county, and within a few miles of the city of Montreal.⁶⁴

Moreover, Gosford reported, LaFontaine--whom he described as "one of the most ultra of the party"--refused to address the meeting at St. Laurent because of the "paucity of hearers" (one could, however, suspect LaFontaine of other motives in light of his subsequent conduct). Gosford concluded that other meetings held elsewhere in the province had also "proved failures."⁶⁵ Whether the Vindicator or Gosford was correct as to the numbers in attendance at the Richelieu meeting, the patriote meetings held in the spring and summer of 1837 were certainly pale precursors of the "Monster Meetings" which were held all over Ireland in

⁶⁴ Gosford to Glenelg, 25 May 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 336-37 (also The Durham Papers, pp. 267-68).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* Gosford remained anxious to reassure the Colonial Office that he had the Canadian situation under some semblance of control, and on 4 July he wrote Glenelg: "Lest you should draw your conclusions of what is going on here from such statements as those made in the 'Minerve' and 'Vindicator' newspapers, I am induced to write a short letter, merely to acquaint you that Mr. Papineau with a few of his party, have been actively employed in attending meetings in different parts of this province, with the view of exciting and inflaming the minds of the people (nominally) against Lord J. Russell's Resolutions; but in fact, to disseminate doctrines of an illegal and seditious tendency. The papers above mentioned would lead you to suppose that Mr. Papineau's efforts have been attended with great success; but from all the reports which have been made to me of the proceedings at these meetings, I am led to conclude that the accounts given in those journals are, to say the least, greatly exaggerated; indeed, in some instances the results have been what may be called a failure. Mr. Papineau is, from all I can learn, losing ground. The country is quiet. Though I should imagine that Mr. Papineau's party have emissaries employed in various directions working mischief, it requires caution and vigilance; but I do not see any ground for apprehending any thing like serious commotion." *Ibid.*, p. 346.

1843 in support of O'Connell's campaign for the repeal of the Union.⁶⁶

O'Callaghan addressed a letter of some importance to Papineau at this time. In it he commented on rumors current in Montreal that Lewis Gugs was to be replaced as sheriff by none other than Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine:

Jacques Viger is very constant in his visits to my quarters of late--with what view only he and God know. We were talking yesterday over the rumoured appointment of LaFontaine when he (Jacques) told me that he had been to see LaFontaine yesterday morning when the latter asked him 'if there was a Law to oblige Members of the Assembly to resign their seats on their accepting a place of profit under the Crown?' Jacques concludes from this very significant question that L'affaire est décidée. A few days more will we presume clear the whole thing up. LaFontaine himself is, I am informed much more moderate of late in his Politics. He is reported to have said the position taken by the Assembly is too far advanced, and qu'il faut reculer. Perhaps he has got a new Light. Time will tell.⁶⁷

At the same time a friend of his named John Ryan had reported that LaFontaine and A.-N. Morin had dined at the Château with thirteen or fourteen other members of the Quebec reform party, only one of whom was English. Gosford was apparently prepared to give places "to Radicals without seeking from them a change in Politics & c. I fear much that that party will give us trouble before they are thoroughly understood by the Country."⁶⁸ The radical reformers did indeed have much to fear from such attempts at the subversion of the moderates. And they also

⁶⁶ See Kee, pp. 202-11.

⁶⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 March 1837, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2285-87.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

had a good deal to fear from the clergy, which was becoming increasingly pro-British, as O'Callaghan commented: "It seems at present that the clergy are beginning either to be very great friends of the administration or to be frightened about the French Revolution of which Parent has been writing."⁶⁹ And indeed, Father McMahon, a staunch opponent of O'Callaghan, welcomed a large group of clerical dignitaries, including Bishop de Sydime, to his celebration of Mass on St. Patrick's Day.⁷⁰ And the St. Andrew's Society of that city saw fit to march in the St. Patrick's Day procession, "in order to show this mark of respect to our Irish Brethren."⁷¹

The reformers meanwhile were active on all fronts. On 15 June a sub-committee of the Permanent and Central Committee of Montreal, of which O'Callaghan was a member, suggested a boycott of all taxable

⁶⁹ Ibid. Etienne Parent, the editor of Le Canadien in Quebec City, was causing O'Callaghan much concern at the time: "You see Mr. Parent's Canadien is in favour of the Crown giving charters to the Banks and does not consider it an encroachment on the privileges of the Assembly. Truly that body has been very fortunate in its choice of a Law Clerk. He ought, in my opinion, be made Law Clerk to the Legislative or Executive Council. The sooner the better, as his doctrines of late are fit only for those dens of colonial senility. Ryan says he is informed that Parent prides himself much on the support he is receiving from the Catholic Clergy. His doctrines smell so much of 'Church and State' that it is not at all surprising."

⁷⁰ Le Canadien, 20 March 1837.

⁷¹ A Member of the St. Andrew's Society to the Editor of the Québec Gazette, 15 March 1837, Neilson Collection, PAC, MG24-B1, 9: 189. Tory J. Walker found himself in a difficult position when his name appeared in the Québec Gazette as an appointee to the managing committee of the St. Patrick's Society. He expressed his concern in a letter to Samuel Neilson that this might jeopardize his job at the House of Assembly and noted that he would have refused the position for safety's sake had he been forewarned. As it was he requested Neilson's advice as to whether he should publish a denial of any such appointment: J. Walker to Samuel Neilson, 10 March 1837, *ibid.*, p. 182.

items.⁷² All patriote supporters were called upon to consume only products produced in the province, or imported without payment of duty, thus depriving the state of a valuable source of revenue and simultaneously encouraging local manufactures, as well as smuggling.⁷³ The last was, of course, illegal, but popular nonetheless. This same strategy of boycotting British manufactures had been pursued by the United Irish in 1793.⁷⁴ It has a natural appeal to those elements within a society who feel unfair competition from imported goods, apart from its obvious political and fiscal implications.

On 27 June, the Vindicator, in announcing that an "Anti-Coercion" meeting of the City of Montreal would be held two days later, proclaimed: "Once more, Reformers, be alive, and show yourselves to be men worthy of free and responsible Institutions. DOWN WITH COERCION!!!"⁷⁵ In the same issue O'Callaghan defended himself against a charge made by Le Canadien that the "moderate" resolutions passed by the reform meeting in his constituency of Yamaska indicated that it had rejected "the extreme political opinions of the Doctor....The Doctor's constituents have declared in unequivocal terms, that he has been too far; that he has compromised, by his violence, the future fate of the country." The editor responded caustically that the resolutions were apparently "moderate" since they only accused Gosford of deception, plundering, insulting the people and risking revolt, but did not advocate smuggling

⁷² Vindicator, 23 June 1837.

⁷³ Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 285; Elinor Senior, p. 25.

⁷⁴ Daley, pp. 47-49.

⁷⁵ Vindicator, 27 June 1837.

to avoid paying taxes.⁷⁶ His newspaper also reported that the patriote celebration of St. Jean Baptiste Day had been oiled by only whiskey, beer, cider and water: nothing taxable.⁷⁷ And on 4 July the Vindicator reprinted the American Declaration of Independence!⁷⁸ The reform meeting in Montreal was attended by 3,500 or 4,000 people, according to the Vindicator. Gosford was condemned, and the non-consumption of British articles commended. O'Callaghan, Robert Nelson, and T.S. Brown were among the prominent English-speaking patriotes present.⁷⁹

O'Connell had used mass meetings to good effect in 1829 during his campaign to emancipate the Catholic population of Ireland, and the British Radical Joseph Hume was convinced that the Reform Bill of 1832 would not have been carried without a "display of physical force." This seems to have made Mackenzie consider action even beyond demonstrations, but Papineau and O'Callaghan seem to have expected the British to give in when confronted by massive public discontent.⁸⁰ Yet both O'Connell's repeal campaign and the Chartist agitation of the 1840's

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 4 July 1837.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 30 June 1837.

⁸⁰ William Kilbourn, The Firebrand (Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin, 1956), pp. 110, 152.

relied heavily--but unsuccessfully--on this tactic.⁸¹ One might almost consider the agitation of 1837 in Lower Canada as a testing ground for British intransigence--they had conceded as much and as often as they intended to for the present.

But the Tories were not dormant, and held a mass meeting of their own early in July attended by such luminaries as Peter McGill, Adam Thom, John Molson, C.-C. de Bleury and Stanley Bagg, as well as, if Gosford is to be believed, 4,000 common people.⁸² Another such gathering was held on 31 July.⁸³ And in Quebec City a petition was circulated which demanded a meeting of the "Inhabitants of Quebec and its vicinity, who disapprove of the attempts made at recent meetings in different parts of the Province to disseminate disrespect to the Public Authorities."⁸⁴ It was signed by over 4,000 people and an analysis of the signatures reveals that an overwhelming majority were English or Scots in origin, with relatively small, although not insignificant, numbers of French Canadians and Irish.⁸⁵

O'Callaghan attacked this gathering mercilessly. Even a poem was composed for the occasion, entitled "Grand Meeting of Anti-Reformers":

⁸¹ See David Jones, Chartism and Chartists (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); and J.T. Ward, Chartism (London: B.T. Batsford, 1973). The patriots had contacts with some Chartists, including two London Workingmen's Associations which protected against Russell's Resolutions: Ryerson, pp. 63-65.

⁸² Quebec Gazette, 12 July 1837; and Gosford to Glenelg, 11 July 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, vol. 39, pp. 347-48, Enclosure (also in Durham Papers, pp. 272-73). It was called by a petition bearing 1,200 signatures.

⁸³ Quebec Gazette, 4 August 1837.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 26 and 28 July 1837.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* Of the first 663 signatures, 424 seem English or Scottish (64%), 130 French (20%), 77 Irish (12%) and 32 (5%) of another nationality or indeterminate.

Owls, Hawks, Kites, Vultures, with hungry jaws,
And ravening stomach and harpy claws;
All gathered together, wild with fear,
That the end of their pillaging reign was near.⁸⁶

His editorial claimed credibly that McGill and the other great importing merchants were up in arms because the boycott of British goods was hurting their business. It continued:

One year's perseverance in that policy saved the old colonies from the Stamp Tax. Let us but rigidly follow it, and we shall have these merchants, who are now so hostile to our liberties, and so active in getting up meetings to crush us,--petitioning the British Parlaiment to concede to us those reforms which it now so insolently and so insultingly refuses.⁸⁷

It was not an unreasonable prognostication.

Irish support for reform within the province was by now anything but overwhelming, as is evidenced by their meagre participation in the anti-government meetings held in the summer of 1837. And while it is true that most of the counties had only small Irish populations, it is interesting that the rather heavily Irish counties of Beauharnois, Dorchester, Lotbinière, Mégantic, Ottawa and Sherbrooke did not hold meetings, or at least none were reported in the Vindicator.⁸⁸ However, geography was certainly a major factor in this, as these counties were not within the main area of agricultural blight or of agitation. Irish

⁸⁶ Vindicator, 11 July 1837.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ See appendix J.

support for the patriote cause was, in effect, confined to the urban areas. The rural Irish population undoubtedly felt too isolated to be willing to risk notoriety, even if so inclined. Nor did O'Callaghan have the time to organize and encourage them.

The Imperial and Provincial governments were, meanwhile, continuing their machinations. Late in May Russell's Resolutions passed through the House of Lords and Glenelg wrote to Gosford that the cabinet intended to act on them at once. Nevertheless he was still hopeful that the Assembly of Lower Canada would, even at this late hour, realize its error, abandon its intransigence, and vote supply before the British Parliament was forced to bypass its authority. To this end he instructed the Governor to convene the Assembly and assure it of the government's goodwill and willingness to remedy grievances where consistent with imperial policy. If, however, that body were to prove once again recalcitrant, it was to be prorogued.⁸⁹ Three days later Gosford wrote in a similar vein, emphasizing the opposition to Russell's Resolutions. He suggested that the Assembly be dissolved unless it became more reasonable and that the Legislative Council be liberalized at the same time and "an efficient Executive Council" be established. He concluded:

Nothing is more erroneous, in my opinion, than the supposition that the French Canadians are a disloyal body: I have every reason to believe the contrary. I have not the slightest apprehension of any serious commotion coming out of these meetings, which as far as regards the district of Montreal, are planned and

⁸⁹ Glenelg to Gosford, 27 May 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 326-28 (also The Durham Papers, pp. 279-82).

concocted, and the resolutions formed by the same individuals, few in number, who, it is understood, are desirous of substituting a republican for the existing form of government.⁹⁰

O'Callaghan was certainly one of the latter, but he does not seem to have been present at the meeting of the county of Montreal which resolved that Russell's Resolutions "destroy, de facto, the rights and liberties of the people of the province," nor did he attend that held in the county of Richelieu, nor that in Quebec City on 4 June, but he did take part in the gathering in Montreal on 29 June.⁹¹

By early June the Governor was no longer as sanguine, and he wrote to Glenelg that he believed there existed in the province "a system of organization" under Papineau which aimed to discredit the government and establish a convention "which he expects will overawe the constituted authorities, and thus carry all his destructive views into execution." As a result, Gosford had decided "to check the evil in its infancy" by issuing a Proclamation "warning the people against the misrepresentations and machinations of the designing" and by sending for one of the regiments stationed in the Maritimes. Gosford was, in effect, to some extent emulating the policy followed in Ireland by Lord Camden in 1796-97:

I must repeat, that these steps would not be dictated by the apprehension of any serious commotion; for I have every reason to believe that the

⁹⁰ Gosford to Glenelg, 28 May 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 336-37. Gosford often sounds more like an intelligence officer than a governor, and he seems to make his reports as favorable as possible so as to reflect positively on his administration.

⁹¹ Ibid., enclosures 1 and 2, pp. 337-41; The Durham Papers, pp. 259-67.

mass of the Canadians are loyal and contented, but from the persuasion that the presence of a larger military force in this Province might of itself prevent the occurrence of any disturbance, by deterring the ill-disposed, securing the wavering, and giving confidence to the timid.⁹²

Gosford intended to be firm, but, like his adversaries Papineau and O'Callaghan, he was not a man suited to the temper of the times, and like them he would soon fade from the Canadian scene. In a despatch sent a few days later Glenelg commented: "I earnestly hope that nothing will occur to disappoint the expectation which you had formed of the undisturbed continuance of peace and good order in the Province."⁹³ It is doubtful that he himself had much confidence in that pious hope by then.

By 15 June the Governor had indeed sent for the regiment available in the Maritimes, and had issued a Proclamation disallowing all seditious writings and meetings and calling upon the magistrates and officers of the militia or of the peace "to oppose and frustrate all insidious designs...and to preserve, by their loyal cooperation, the vigour and inviolability of the laws, on which their religion and future happiness depend."⁹⁴ Shortly thereafter he made known to Glenelg his recommendation for the new members of the Legislative and Executive

⁹² Gosford to Glenelg, 10 June 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 342 (also The Durham Papers, p. 269).

⁹³ Glenelg to Gosford, 13 June 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 329.

⁹⁴ Gosford to Glenelg, 15 June 1837, The Durham Papers, pp. 269-71.

Councils.⁹⁵ Thus the carrot and stick were about to be placed on the table for public inspection, that both might be measured and weighed. Only by imperial standards could the two ever balance: a handful of "moderates" on the one side, a full regiment of the line on the other.

On 7 July the Quebec Gazette warned its readers that the "Plan of Treason and Rebellion" of the patriote leaders had recently been revealed in a letter to the New York Express of 29 June from "L.N.M.," who "is clearly in their secrets, and a traitor and intended rebel, after their own hearts." It was not yet considered expedient by the radicals, according to the Gazette, to reveal the full extent of their seditious intentions within the province since

The present publication of their plan was deemed necessary to encourage foreign co-operation, and it was accordingly published in the United States. It was besides not wary, immediately, to tell the peaceable inhabitants of the province what good soldiers they would make, under American cadets from West Point, and adventurers from France. Neither was it deemed prudent to inform the proprietors throughout the country, that confiscation of property was their chief ways and means, and that Lynch law was to be enforced against all who might not be disposed to break up the connexion with the country of their birth or their forefathers.⁹⁶

The fiery editorial concluded: "Time will show how far the British government, the loyal inhabitants of this province and the neighboring colonies, will allow these CATALINES to disturb their peace, ruin their

⁹⁵ Gosford to Glenelg, 26 June 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 344-45. Prominent on both lists was O'Callaghan's old foe, John Neilson.

⁹⁶ Quebec Gazette, 7 July 1837.

industry, and mark out their victims.⁹⁷

In London Glenelg could coolly evaluate such conflicting reports, and calculate how best to implement measures of conciliation or coercion so as to best achieve imperial ends. Within the province, however, the common Irish farmer or labourer had less calm and far less information, and to his mind the situation must have seemed fraught with peril. Newly arrived from a land of violence, hatred and insecurity, he was, even if dedicated to liberal and democratic principles and suspicious or resentful of British rule, nevertheless anxious lest he once more see himself, his family and his friends subjected to the perils of rebel terror, martial law and reactionary atrocity. The leap from reformer to revolutionary is over a wide chasm of doubt and fear, and few Irishmen in Canada in 1837, apart from the editor of the Vindicator, were likely to feel the sense of security, of commitment and of injustice necessary to be willing to make it. All that O'Callaghan could hope was that many of his countrymen would be sufficiently discontented to be willing to resent any use of force by the government, and that he and his colleagues could give to any emotional response an organized system and a concrete direction. Otherwise the Irish population would support the government, remain docile, or, worse, rise without purpose or strategy. The same diagnosis was, of course, with some minor variations, applicable to the Canadien peasantry, which was only slightly more secure and just as ill-informed. It was now incumbent on the revolutionary leaders--for, considering the government's posture, this was what they must now be, as they were themselves unwilling to compromise, and could

97 Ibid.

probably not have done so by this point without betraying their principles and exposing their followers to the scourge of reaction--to organize and arm their supporters, to seek outside support, and to deceive the authorities as to their intentions. Mass meetings to rouse the populace could not, by any stretch of the imagination, achieve these objectives, nor contribute to them. They were the tools of the political agitator, whose time in Lower Canada was, by the summer of 1837, past.

The situation continued to deteriorate. Attacks were made on the homes of Tory "loyalists" in Deux-Montagnes, and Gosford was forced to "proclaim" the district under martial law, a step taken so often in Ireland. He considered that "These measures, and the arrival from Halifax of the 83rd. regiment in two vessels of war which have just come into port, will, I am confident, produce tranquillizing and excellent results throughout the province" and he remained certain "that no disturbance or serious interruption of the usual course of events is likely to occur."⁹⁸ In the same despatch he once again reported on Papineau's recent activities in the district of Quebec which met "with very little success," and contrasted them with the great Loyalist meeting in Montreal of 6 July. Shortly thereafter Glenelg wrote the Governor that he might delay drawing funds on the Treasury if the Assembly seemed conciliatory.⁹⁹ More loyal meetings were held in July, one at Napierville and another at Trois-Rivières.¹⁰⁰ But the meeting held in Quebec City,

⁹⁸ Gosford to Glenelg, 11 July 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 347-48.

⁹⁹ Glenelg to Gosford, 14 July 1837, *ibid.*, pp. 334-35.

¹⁰⁰ The Durham Papers, pp. 275-278.

which had been convoked by a petition of some 4,350 persons, managed to produce a loyal address which was signed by only seventy-nine!¹⁰¹

Late in August Glenelg addressed to Gosford a despatch of some importance. He indicated that the death of the King, and accession of Queen Victoria, which had necessitated the temporary adoption of a less provocative financial policy towards Lower Canada, provided yet another chance for conciliation: "I would fain hope that whatever may be the excitement of the people, there will at least be no recourse to open acts of violence and armed defiance of the authority of Government." He did not yet know the results of the proposed session of the Legislature, but "if the Assembly...should vote the supplies, it will then be easy to offer to the party opposed to your Government concessions, the tender of which at an earlier period would only have been misconstrued." But he was not optimistic and considered that Gosford would be forced to dissolve the Assembly. Nonetheless, "the authority of Great Britain, being thus vindicated, we are free to enter on a conciliatory course. Thus, whether the supplies be granted or refused, there will be an opportunity of making with safety, because without dishonour, another attempt to reconcile these unhappy differences."¹⁰² He went on to propose that this be done by a reform of the Legislative Council, listing five plans for its alteration, but ruling out the concept of election. He then noted: "Now as to the different plans of change which

¹⁰¹ Gosford to Glenelg, 7 August 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 349-50, enclosure 1 (also The Durham Papers, pp. 274-75) and Quebec Gazette, 26 July and 28 July. Of the seventy-nine signatories, thirty-seven were apparently French, twenty-seven English or Scots, three Irish and twelve other or uncertain.

¹⁰² Glenelg to Gosford, 31 August 1837, The Durham Papers, pp. 296-302.

have specified, it is obvious to remark that in all of them, excepting that of Mr. Roebuck, which sins in the opposite direction [and which he had already rejected in the despatch], the improvement is sought by adding to the power, not of the people, but of the Crown".¹⁰³ In effect, Glenelg was willing to concede to the demand of the Tories and merchants for a stronger government--as noted earlier, it was for the British now a question only of how much power the Assembly was going to lose!

It would obviously not be easy to persuade the Assembly to accept this, but Glenelg felt he was not without resources:

I fear it must be assumed that we have nothing to hope from the attachment, or the loyalty, or the love of peace, of the persons by whom a system of agitation has recently been organized throughout the Province. But there are motives which may influence even these men in favour of a more conciliatory system. The measures which they have taken have not been attended with such success as greatly to encourage the further prosecution of them. They must be aware of the personal hazards which they incur. Happily the other Provinces have withdrawn from all alliance with them. Their only hope of external support must be placed in the neighbouring republic, or in its individual citizens, and this is clearly a resource equally dangerous and precarious. They must be aware that assistance obtained from that quarter, if successful for their immediate purpose, would be followed by the disappointment of all their own prospects of power and domination, and by the overthrow of all the institutions to which their misguided followers are most attached. To these motives for waiving their extreme pretensions, others might be added, drawn from the known disposition of the British Government to admit the conspicuous and more worthy leaders of the French party to a just and ample share in all the honours and emoluments to which public men in Lower Canada can aspire.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Ibid. The italics have been added by the author.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Such a cynical appraisal is reminiscent of the use made of bribery and patronage to control the Irish Parliament before the Union, and once again indicates just how far from the Colonial Secretary's mind was any notion of making real concessions.

Lord Gosford opened the last session of the Lower Canadian Parliament on 18 August 1837. He addressed the two chambers, reiterating his call for the passage of supply, but promising little in the way of reform.¹⁰⁵ The Assembly, however, remained firm in its rejection of the governor's blandishments, the majority in favour of a hard line never falling below fifteen, one of whom was always the member for Yamaska.¹⁰⁶ The address in reply to the governor's speech was explicit:

...the application of the elective principle to the Legislative Council, the repeal of all undue privileges and monopolies, and of injurious laws passed in England, the free exercise of the right and privileges of this Legislature, and of this House in particular, and the establishment of a popular and responsible Government, are the only means by which...the political connexion with Great Britain [can be] rendered beneficial to the people of Canada.¹⁰⁷

These were not words which suited Gosford's taste, and he prorogued

¹⁰⁵ Gosford to Glenelg, 18 August 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 351-53, Enclosure (also The Durham Papers, pp. 282-85). The very day that the session began (18 August), the Morning Herald of Quebec called Papineau a "traitor."

¹⁰⁶ Lower Canada, House of Assembly, Journal 1837.

¹⁰⁷ Gosford to Glenelg, 26 August 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 353-57, enclosure 2 (also The Durham Papers, pp. 285-90). The final vote on the address was 48 to 31.

Parliament the next day--26 August.¹⁰⁸ There just was no more to be said: the Assembly was calling the very basis of the government's authority into question.

It was a challenge that the government at Quebec would answer from the mouths of its cannon. There really was little alternative by then, except to step down from the iron pedestal of imperial authority, and this the British, and their Tory dependents in Canada, were just as unwilling to do as had been the former and the Irish Ascendancy in Ireland in 1798. O'Callaghan, of all men, should have known this and realized its implications much earlier--or, if he did, he should have calculated more carefully the relative abilities of the two sides to wage an armed struggle.

Yet he remained determined to pursue his liberal democratic philosophy to its conclusion, and the Vindicator thundered away boldly. But its editor was very close to Papineau, who seems to have aimed at the intimidation of the British, not their overthrow. If this was the case, then he had badly miscalculated, and so had his disciple, for neither seems to have been prepared to lead a revolution. In fact, O'Callaghan was having great difficulty keeping the majority of the Irish committed to reform. To ask them to revolt would be to whistle in the wind.

Perhaps O'Callaghan was misled by the success of O'Connell's popular, and peaceful, movement to emancipate the Catholics of Ireland, or deceived by triumphant risings in some European countries earlier in the decade. But neither situation was analogous--the patriotes were not

¹⁰⁸ Gosford to Glenelg, 30 August 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 358-60 (also The Durham Papers, pp. 290-93).--

strong enough to achieve a revolution, and the British were not prepared to give in to their demands. As it was, just as in Ireland forty years earlier, the cause of the people was about to be led down the path of division, deception and defeat. O'Callaghan, Papineau and their colleagues were scarcely prepared for the ruthless retribution which they had called down upon their own heads, and those of their followers. They must now reap in blood and tears what they had all too readily sown.

CHAPTER VI

RELUCTANT REBEL

1837

It was one huge, damnable conspiracy of the Government against the people to hurry them into resistance so that they may the more easily annihilate them and their rights.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1837¹

There are several questions about the Rebellion of 1837 which this chapter will attempt to answer. The most important concern the causation and nature of the rebellion, the reasons for its failure, and the relative lack of participation by the non-French, and especially the Irish population of the province. The rôle that O'Callaghan played will be carefully examined, and the reasons for the ultimate failure of the reform alliance of French Canadians and Irish will be analyzed. All of these questions are crucial to an understanding of the patriote movement as well as the rebellion. Lord Durham, followed by many historians, believed that Lower Canada was beset by unrest because "two nations [were] warring in the bosom of a single state." But was it really that simple--were the stated aspirations of Papineau, O'Callaghan and countless other patriotes for a more liberal and democratic system of government merely a cover for the demands of nationalism?

As the last days of the summer of 1837 slipped away, so did any last chance that an armed confrontation between the patriotes and the

¹ E.B. O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 15 December 1837, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 25-28.

government could be averted. Among the former there reigned an aura of almost desperate enthusiasm, largely unfettered by any calculation of consequences, and tethered only by very justified apprehensions. The authorities, on the other hand, were determined to deal only in cold realities, and not the hopeful illusions which seemed to form the basis of patriote planning. Although inclined by nature to conciliation, Lord Gosford was, by the summer of 1837, becoming convinced that any thoughts of a mediated settlement were almost certainly beyond realization. He wrote to the Colonial Secretary early in September:

It is evident that the Papineau faction are not to be satisfied with any concession that does not place them in a more favourable position to carry into effect their ulterior objects, namely, the separation of this country from England, and the establishment of a republican form of government. Mr. Papineau has gone such lengths that he must now persevere in the course he has taken, or submit to a defeat which would annihilate all his power and influence.²

Gosford was concerned, moreover, that the "unjustifiable attacks" made by the Tories upon the French Canadians were playing right into Papineau's hands by engendering "an animosity, which Mr. Papineau does not fail to turn to account." The Governor even blamed this circumstance for Papineau's hold over so many members of the Assembly. And, while he did not foresee any present "ground for alarm" despite the proliferation of Papineau's agents throughout the province, he felt it was incumbent upon him to "guard against the evils that might follow from the attempts making to excite discontent among the people by the

² Gosford to Glenelg, 2 September 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 362.

most abominable misrepresentations." He therefore concluded regretfully: "The executive requires more power, and under my present impression, I am disposed to think that you may be under the necessity of suspending the constitution."³ As in the Ireland of 1798, the plan was now to suppress, by force if necessary, all opposition to the Crown.

In a "Private and Confidential" letter to Glenelg which he despatched a few days later, Gosford in effect wrote his own epitaph on his administration's failure, and a statement of what must now be done to prevent any further damage, however much he disliked the methods which he was recommending. He commented first on the plans of the patriotes: they were lately holding less frequent county meetings, since there was no further need to influence the votes in the Assembly, but were instead keeping "the country in a state of excitement by means of a convention, as it is termed, a central committee, which meet regularly in Montreal." That body sent out its orders to the local committees throughout the province, and even published its proceedings in the Vindicator and La Minerve. But although these meetings were of "a treasonable tendency," he felt the time was not yet ripe to institute legal proceedings, for "to attempt it without a good strong case might do more harm than good." Under the circumstances Gosford could not but contemplate the need to suspend Habeas Corpus if the situation further deteriorated. Therefore, he wrote:

...should circumstances arise for apprehending such a crisis it must be met by promptness, firmness, and decision. To attempt anything of a temporizing

³ ibid.

character would be weak and futile: I should at once avail myself of the powers confided to me. We can now make no terms with Mr. Papineau: you must either put him down, or submit to let him put you down. There is no halting between two opinions. By at once increasing the power of the Executive, and suspending the Constitution, you paralyze the designs of these mischievous men; it would establish confidence in the minds of those disposed to peace and good government, and at no distant period you might be solicited to restore the Constitution to the Province, under arrangements better calculated to afford satisfaction than could be accomplished by any effort or proposal in the present state of things, for until you nullify Papineau's power, you can never be in a position to treat on anything like fair and liberal terms with a man of his extravagant, uncompromising, destructive views, exercising, as he does, complete control over the minds of many who have been too long accustomed to be under his yoke.⁴

Gosford was also convinced that the "jealousy that exists between the two origins" was a tool in the hands of the patriotes, as was "the violent hostility of an ultra English party (resembling the Orange party in Ireland) to every thing connected with an Administration professing your political principles," as this tended "greatly to assist the Papineau set in their object of exciting hatred and contempt for English authority." But Gosford remained nonetheless assured of the loyalty "of the great body of French Canadians," and felt that ethnic animosities were actually diminished since his arrival. He regretted that he had not earlier granted some necessary reforms which would have appeased the majority, and thus isolated the extremists on both sides who were the cause of all the turmoil. He concluded by a subtle declaration of his readiness to tender his resignation, and indeed his desire to be re-

⁴ Gosford to Glenelg, 8 September 1837, *ibid.*, pp. 363-64; also The Durham Papers, pp. 302-4. The italics have been added by the author.

lieved of his duties was scarcely veiled.⁵ Gosford was well aware that harsh measures might soon be necessary, but he evidently had no stomach for applying them. He was, in fact, a man very like Papineau and O'Callaghan: a man of words.

The radical leadership was, meanwhile, floundering about in an illusion. Thus ~~the~~ suspension of Russell's Resolutions on 23 June had had no effect on them; neither did the appointment of seven new French Canadian legislative councillors.⁶ Nor did Bishop Lartigue's denunciation of sedition on 25 July quiet the agitators.⁷ Even Gosford's evident determination to take steps for the defense of his government failed to alter the radicals' perception of the situation. After the replacement of many suspect justices of the peace and militia officers, the Vindicator commented on 15 August: "The country is prepared to meet the enemy--aye, and to beat him...the militia officers of Lower Canada will again firmly meet oppression and insolent dictation, and crush both the one and the other."⁸ But the government was taking strong steps to prevent any such defeat: by the beginning of the month two additional

⁵ He wrote: "My situation now is not an enviable one; and God knows, on every private consideration, I shall gladly relinquish it. I am fully sensible of the friendly feelings you entertain towards me, and I am also convinced of the favourable disposition of your colleagues in the Government. To support the principles of the present Ministry is my great object; and it is probable, and indeed reasonable, that if matters here should come to extremities, you would prefer to have a man in my place who had not so avowedly, declared his wish to carry on his Government on the principle of conciliation. In stating this, be assured at the same time, that I do not shrink from the difficulties which surround me; nor would I wish in any way to embarrass the Administration." Sessional papers, 1837-38, 39: 364.

⁶ Wade, pp. 164-5.

⁷ Ibid., p. 164.

⁸ Vindicator, 15 August 1837.

regiments had reached Montreal, one from Halifax and the other from Toronto, bringing the garrison's strength to over 1,000 men. There were almost twice as many at Quebec City, also including two recently arrived regiments. But General Colbourne considered his forces still insufficient, and arranged during October for further reinforcements in case of trouble.⁹

At an "anti-coercion" meeting of the counties of L'Assomption and Lachenaie early in August, Papineau declared that "The English Government is a bad Government" but cautioned that "Resistance must be commenced with prudence." Nevertheless, he added that the people could not remain forever submissive: "Ask no more by humble petitions."¹⁰ On 8 September, the Vindicator again encouraged the boycott of taxable goods, but added that, if such peaceful resistance was ineffective, "What other shape that resistance may take by and by, circumstances alone can determine."¹¹ On the same day the paper reported the formation of the Sons of Liberty by 500 or 600 men in Montreal, and chortled: "May the God of the oppressed nerve their young hearts, and bless their patriotic purpose."¹² O'Callaghan was chosen to be one of the leaders of the new group.¹³

A violent clash was now looming, and, while the patriotes seemed

⁹ Elinor Senior, pp. 28, 34.

¹⁰ Reported in the Vindicator, 4 August 1837.

¹¹ Ibid., 8 September 1837.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ O'Callaghan and Papineau headed up the civil wing, while T.S. Brown and Joshua Bell were in charge of the "military" wing: Elinor Senior, p. 17 - see also Rumilly, Papineau 1: 461. The president was André Guimet.

at least vaguely aware of this, they continued to exhibit the most incredible naïveté. Not only did they meet, parade and demonstrate openly, but they were easily goaded to excess by Tory "ultras," who acted the part played by the Orangemen in Ireland in 1798. And while they were making efforts to organize and arm their supporters, these were scarcely sufficient under the circumstances. In Montreal and Quebec City, moreover, the situation was still reminiscent of the preparations for a political donnybrook, not a military confrontation. On 4 October the Sons of Liberty proclaimed in an "Address to the Young Men of the North American Colonies" their dedication to an elective Legislative Council and a responsible executive, an end to the encroachment of foreign jurisdiction, an improved system for the sale of public lands, the abolition of pluralities and other abuses in the distribution of offices, equality before the law for all classes, irregardless of origin, language or religion; and called on "the young men of these provinces to form associations in their several localities, for the attainment of good, cheap, responsible government, and for the security, defense and extension of our common liberties."¹⁴

The authorities were aware of virtually everything the opposition did, which was scarcely surprising, as secrecy was hardly even attempted. Sir John Colborne, the commander-in-chief in the province, counselled Gosford early in the month not to overestimate the success of the patriotes in rousing the peasantry, which was as yet passive. However, he warned that, although the agitation was "chiefly intended to intimidate the Home Government" and to demonstrate that revolt was

¹⁴ Address of "The Sons of Liberty" of Montreal, to the Young Men of the North American Colonies, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 382-84.

imminent, it "must tend to promote effectually the avowed object of Mr. Papineau."¹⁵ The general's assessment of the objective of the patriote leaders indicates that the British were not unaware of the precarious and misguided nature of the sedition with which they were faced. Their opponents were not, unfortunately, equally cognizant of the very serious danger they were now risking. Colborne noted that the tri-couleur was raised at St. Hyacinthe, St. Denis and St. Charles; that Wolfred Nelson had warned the patriotes at a public meeting to be ready to arm; that promissory notes were issued at Yamaska; and that Papineau was escorted from Yamaska to St. Denis accompanied by 200-300 carriages to attend a mass rally there. He concluded prophetically: "The game which Mr. Papineau is playing cannot be mistaken; and we must be prepared to expect that if four or five hundred persons are allowed to parade the streets of Montreal at night, singing revolutionary songs, the excited parties will come in collision."¹⁶

It was becoming evident that action must soon be taken to put an end to these annoyances. On 10 October Gosford wrote to the Colonial Secretary intimating a plan of action:

M. Papineau and his party [are] carrying on a system of agitation and excitement in every way they can; and, in some instances, I apprehend, they have, by threats and menaces, caused alarm in the minds of some of the well-disposed, which paralyses those efforts and exertions which they would otherwise willingly afford to the civil authority in maintaining peace and order. Every precaution is taken, and I trust I may be able to procure some information, on oath, by which I should be authorized to lay hold of some of the leaders connected with what is going

¹⁵ Sir John Colborne to Gosford, 6 October 1837, *ibid.*, p. 382.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

on; if I could accomplish this, I should look forward with more certainty than I can at this moment, to the speedy re-establishment of order and tranquillity. All these proceedings I may say are confined to Montreal district; here we are quite quiet and tranquil; some mischievous persons amongst us, but those of another character so greatly predominate, that there is no ground for apprehending any disturbance here.¹⁷

The problem, then, lay in the Montreal district, and the solution in arresting the leadership. This would leave the popular movement rudderless, as it had in Ireland forty years earlier, after which it would either disintegrate or rise hopelessly.

While the British prepared to decapitate the movement, the patriotes blissfully continued their agitation. In the eyes of the government the opposition sometimes took on an aura of strength which was scarcely justified--a phenomenon also noticeable in the Ireland of 1798 when spies and informers, as well as the documents of the conspirators themselves, seem to have left the government with an exaggerated view of the strength of the United Irish. For it is important to note that, while these conspiratorial games often seem somewhat ridiculous to the historical observer, they are taken very seriously by the participants. Thus Gosford believed that Papineau had the support of most of the members of the Assembly for the district of Montreal, and that, while much of the rural population was not as yet disaffected, that propaganda, as well as fear and intimidation, were working to spread the insurrectionary movement, while at the same time rendering the rule of law ineffective in the area. The means used were nightly parades of armed men; "inflammatory speeches at meetings;" the

¹⁷ Gosford to Glenelg, 10 October 1837, *ibid.*, p. 379.

"seditious publications and resolutions of the central committees;" the placing of loyalists "under a species of excommunication, and keeping them in dread of nocturnal injuries to their property;" and the harassment of officials by burning them in effigy or assembling before their doors at night and causing them alarm by threats, noises "and other manifestations of popular displeasure." The results were the intimidation of the magistracy, the difficulty of obtaining accurate information and the unlikelihood of being able to obtain evidence against the agitators, or of obtaining a conviction by a jury even in the face of strong evidence.¹⁸ All of this was very similar to what occurred in parts of Ireland in 1798, both as to the facts and as to the impression which it left on the authorities.

In light of his view of the situation, then, it is not surprising that Gosford, deeming the civil authorities to be now virtually "impotent," the clergy "reluctant to come forward," and convinced that a new Assembly would be equally intransigent, recommended

...that the only practical course now open for conducting the affairs of this province with any benefit to the inhabitants generally, is at once formally to suspend the present constitution, which both parties unite in confessing cannot now be worked, and which has in fact for the last 12 months been virtually suspended; to increase the military force, and to strengthen the hands of the Executive, now almost impotent for any good and useful purpose.¹⁹

It was only thus, Gosford believed, that the French Canadians could be saved from Papineau and the interests of the English inhabitants be

¹⁸ Gosford to Glenelg, 12 October 1837, *ibid.*, pp. 379-81.

¹⁹ *ibid.*

preserved. Action, moreover, must be swift, lest the other districts also become seriously infected with the political plague which was so far confined mainly to the Montreal district. However serious Gosford really considered the threat to be, it was quite evident that the time was ripe to put an end to the machinations of Papineau and his upstart friends and re-establish the provincial government on a new and firmer basis. The course of the ship of state was therefore firmly set in the direction of suppression.

During these crucial days O'Callaghan and his newspaper remained adamant. On 12 September the Vindicator once again advocated smuggling, noting that the rich had always illegally imported what they wanted from the United States. It added philosophically: "The Tories hold the right of a government over its subjects to be perfect; but it is both imperfect and conditional."²⁰ A month later it commented on the military preparations in the province after it learnt that Gosford had despatched 300 soldiers to Deux-Montagnes to repress the unrest there. The paper regretted that the government intended to use British soldiers as instruments of oppression in a "war against Reform" and the common people: coercion should not be their rôle. "How much prouder would the soldiers feel in their own minds, if they could, on the contrary, congratulate themselves that they assisted in procuring REFORM for Canada, in the same glorious manner, that their brother soldiers in 1829 procured EMANCIPATION for IRELAND."²¹ This was, of course, a thinly veiled call for

²⁰ Vindicator, 12 September 1837.

²¹ Ibid., 13 October 1837.

the soldiers to mutiny! And on 20 October it provided a translation of a German poem entitled "The Sharpening of the Sabre":

Till the long lost Fatherland
Shall be rescued and restored
Turn, boy, turn the stone for me
Sharper must my sabre be.²²

Revolt was in the air.

The clergy was taking an increasingly active part in opposing the patriotes and Bishop Lartigue in a letter of 15 October to the Secretary of Propaganda at Rome noted that he had instructed his priests as to their duty towards those who were preaching revolt and separation from Great Britain. In the same missive he indicated his desire to retire due to his frail health and his unpopularity with both the people and the clergy.²³ The stage was now set for a cataclysmic scene, and for the emergence of a new, more conservative, subtler and more ruthless cast of characters. Gosford continued to struggle to overcome his compunctions, with little success. He informed Glenelg that he would consult with Colborne about drafting troops from the Maritimes, if they could be spared, and added: "With respect to the recommendation for enforcing the oath of allegiance on all Her Majesty's Canadian subjects, as a test of their political principles, and of adopting coercive measures against aliens, I must take some further time for consideration on these points."²⁴ But events would no longer await the Governor's convenience.

²² Ibid., 20 October 1837.

²³ Lartigue to Mgr. MaI, secrétaire de la Propagande, à Rome, 15 October 1837, RAPQ (1944-1945), p. 255.

²⁴ Gosford to Glenelg, 21 October 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 398.

On 23 October most of the radical leaders gathered at the meeting of the Five Counties of the Richelieu Valley at St. Charles which was attended by as many as 5,000 people.²⁵ O'Callaghan was present both as leader and as correspondent for his paper. Papineau addressed the meeting, urging restraint. Wolfred Nelson interrupted him, shouting: "I differ from Mr. Papineau! The time has come to melt our spoons into bullets!" and was loudly cheered.²⁶ The assembly resolved to hold district meetings in December, to elect magistrates and militia officers, to organize "Sons of Liberty" in every parish, and that it would "not oppose" the desertion of British troops to the United States.²⁷ These resolutions, which seem to have been drawn up largely by Papineau and O'Callaghan, were clearly seditious but there seems little doubt that the patriotes were split as to tactics, if not purpose.²⁸ The ringing words of Dr. Côté, "the time for speeches is past. It is lead we will throw at our enemies!" did not find a response in every man who heard them.²⁹ In fact it is interesting that O'Callaghan did not even report them in the Vindicator.

This, then, was the last and the largest of the great meetings held during 1836 and 1837 to protest against the injustices inherent in

²⁵ Gosford to Glenelg, 30 October 1837, *ibid.*, pp. 400-401. Gosford gave this as the figure reported in the "radical" press and less than 1,000 as the estimate of other papers. He believed 1,500 to be a fair number from the accounts of persons present, including about sixty armed men and one cannon.

²⁶ Cited in Schull, p. 58.

²⁷ Vindicator, 24 October 1837.

²⁸ Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 293.

²⁹ Cited in Schull, p. 58.

the present system of government. Like the monster meetings held by Daniel O'Connell in Ireland earlier in the cause of Catholic Emancipation and later when seeking the repeal of the Irish Union, they were undoubtedly effective means of propaganda, but would prove completely ineffectual in achieving any real change in the face of intransigent opposition, such as O'Connell faced in his second crusade. For the British were not taken in by the democratic presumption that the majority rules: in the moment of crisis, it is those with power, which rests ultimately on military or other coercive force, who hold the upper hand, not those with a majority of public support. Public opinion may well prove determinant in the long run, but then only if it is persistent and uncompromising. The mass meetings of the patriotes could therefore be little more, in fact, than a bluff, just as they were for O'Connell. The "liberator" had won in 1829; but in 1843, when his bluff was called, he would back down; not only did Papineau and O'Callaghan not back down, they do not seem to have even intended their ploy as a bluff. Somehow they expected the British to surrender before this show of public support--just as the walls of Jericho collapsed when the Israelites blew their horns. Unfortunately, the patriotes had neglected sufficiently to undermine the edifice of British authority before sounding the trumpets of liberty and republicanism. The walls therefore did not come crashing down: they did not even tremble!

And at this moment of crisis, the patriotes also found themselves badly divided. The more moderate, or calculating, men like LaFontaine, were backing away from the movement, afraid that their interests would be swept away in some radical cataclysm. At the same time extremists like the Nelsons and Côté were rushing headlong into open rebellion,

heedless of Papineau's political design, and of the snares being laid for the movement by the British. But Papineau and O'Callaghan, whose plan would seem to have been to force political change by an appeal to public opinion both in Canada and in Britain, had underestimated both the ruthlessness of the British and the hotheadedness of some of their own followers. To the last the Vindicator trumpeted its call for change, almost oblivious to developments. Only when it was too late did they realize that their fate was now in the hands of other men--of the British authorities, the Tories, and their own extremist followers.

On the same day as the St. Charles assembly, a meeting of some 4,000 Loyalists was held at Montreal.³⁰ The participants resolved, among other things,

That the Irish inhabitants of this city do hereby express their unqualified abhorrence of the low and base attempts that are making to draw them over to the revolutionary party, whose designs they consider inimical to all good government and to the safety and well-being of this province, and at the same time their readiness, should it ever be necessary, to repel by force those whose every action bespeaks them the enemies alike of themselves and their countrymen in general.³¹

After the meeting many of the participants marched through the city displaying the Union Jack and an Irish flag! And on the same day La Minerve denounced the St. Patrick's Society, which had just elected

³⁰ Gosford to Glenelg, 30 October 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 400-401. It was chaired by the Hon. Peter McGill. The Quebec Gazette of 21 October 1837 estimated attendance at 7,500.

³¹ Gosford to Glenelg, 30 October, 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, Enclosure 2, 39: 405-6 (the account is from the Montreal Herald of 26 October 1837).

Father Phelan a member, as an Orange organization.³² That same cleric, Mgr. Bourget reported to the coadjutor of Quebec, had preached with good results to the Irish of Montreal about the need for obedience to the government. It was hoped that Phelan could counter the influence of the Vindicator among the Irish of the city.³³ He also sent him Lartigue's mandement against the patriotes and commented: "Votre Grandeur imaginera bien avec quelle fureur l'on va se déchaîner contre l'Evêque de Montréal: Il est tout préparé à cette nouvelle persécution."³⁴ The mandement was read in the churches on 29 October, and Lartigue wrote the vicar general at Quebec: "A Montréal, des meneurs ont dit qu'il hâterait la révolution qu'ils projettent."³⁵ The Tory offensive was continuing, and many of its guns were steadfastly aimed at the Irish of Montreal.

Gosford continued to fear the worst but hope for the best. His despatch to the Colonial Secretary of 30 October concluded:

With religion, law, and the loyalty of the great bulk of the population opposed to them, the party now fomenting sedition and treason, although they may, if not checked create local temporary confusion, are not likely to meet with the success which, from the boldness of their proceedings, they seem to anticipate. Their great strength lies in activity and the artful and unscrupulous misrepresentations

³² La Minerve, 23 October 1837, p. 3.

³³ Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 480, states: "M. Quiblier a chargé l'abbé Patrick Phelan de contrarier la propagande de O'Callaghan et de son Vindicator parmi les Irlandais de Montréal--qui pourraient entraîner ceux des cantons de l'est et même ceux des États-Unis."

³⁴ Mgr. Bourget to Bishop de Sédyme, coadjutor of Quebec, 26 October 1837, RAPQ (1945-46), pp. 142-43.

³⁵ Bishop Lartigue to Jérôme Demers, vicar general at Quebec, 30 October 1837, RAPQ (1944-45), p. 257.

with which they delude and excite their more ignorant countrymen; and it is evident that one of the main objects of all the recent meetings and proceedings is to produce an effect in England, and to intimidate, as they hope, the imperial and local authorities.³⁶

The clergy, however, were not so confident. Bourget, in reporting on a demonstration by radicals staged outside St. Jacques Church in Montreal during Vespers on a Sunday late in October, noted that the chief agitators such as O'Callaghan, Robert and Wolfred Nelson, Joshua Bell and T.S. Brown were not Catholics--for even O'Callaghan had told Father Phelan that he was Protestant--and added that Lartigue wished the Governor to know that he considered these "protestant" leaders more redoubtable than the Canadiens.³⁷ And Lartigue himself wrote the Bishop of Quebec on 2 November that the impression of government apathy was widespread, and that it was rumoured that many civil officers of the Crown intended to barricade themselves in the Castle at Quebec in case of trouble, leaving the Canadas to their fate.³⁸ It was in this atmosphere of fear, doubt and confusion that the storm, so long lowering on the horizon, finally broke.

By 6 November, Gosford's complacency had vanished, and he considered the situation in the Montreal district to be approaching anarchy. He wrote Glenelg that large bodies of patriotes were openly drilling in

³⁶ Gosford to Glenelg, 30 October 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 400-401.

³⁷ Bourget to de Sidyme, 26 October 1837, RAPO (1945-1946), pp. 142-43. O'Callaghan must have been reacting to the clergy's stance against the patriotes, for he was evidently a devout Catholic both before and after this period.

³⁸ Lartigue to Mgr. Signay, Bishop of Quebec, 2 November 1837, RAPO (1944-1945) p. 257.

military tactics every Sunday and more frequently on private property, that French officers had recently arrived from the United States to direct operations, and that the Tories had revived an old association called the Doric Club which was also drilling under arms. He considered that the radicals wished "to put down the authority of the government," by intimidating its officials by means "of terrorism and midnight marauding," and he and Sir John Colborne had requested Sir Colin Campbell to despatch two more regiments to Lower Canada from the Maritimes.

The expectation of these reinforcements had made it possible for Gosford to instruct the Attorney General to proceed to Montreal "to organize an efficient police force in that city." He nevertheless feared that the districts of Trois-Rivières and Quebec were also becoming infected, and reported that drilling had been expected to begin in Quebec the day previously, "had the weather permitted"! He therefore was more than ever convinced of the necessity for drastic action such as the suspension of Habeas Corpus and a declaration of martial law over all or parts of the province, since otherwise a recourse to military force would soon be requisite, "an alternative which I cannot contemplate without the most painful reluctance." Such measures, he hoped, would cow the patriotes into submission, and allow the government once again to function effectively. He was, moreover, convinced that the patriote leaders would never, in fact, be satisfied by anything the government could offer:

The grievances which were at first put forward by the leaders of this party, would seem to have been mere pretexts to clothe deeper and darker designs. The mask has now been thrown aside, and the

people are excited to disaffection and rebellion, by the most artful and unfounded misrepresentations; and even if all the demands of the Assembly were fully and immediately granted, they would, I begin to think, be insufficient to satisfy the views of those whose evident aim is not to reform, but to destroy the established Government and British connexion.³⁹

It is unlikely that the radicals were nearly as calculating and unified as Gosford assumed, and they certainly were not as formidable, at least in the Quebec district, if the weather could prevent them from drilling.

This despatch was already outdated when sent, however, as the first major clash in the armed struggle was waged on that same day in Montreal. The authorities had been expecting a clash on that date, and were prepared for it.⁴⁰ A meeting of the Sons of Liberty was held in an enclosed courtyard, with speeches by O'Callaghan, Brown and other patriote leaders. When the crowd attempted to disperse, it was attacked by members of the Doric Club and other Tories, in what certainly could be considered a planned provocation. The Sons of Liberty originally outnumbered their opponents, and drove them from the area. But the Tories were preparing a counter-attack while the patriotes began to disperse. T.S. Brown was bludgeoned over the back of the head when returning home, and the Tory crowd then surged into the streets, driving the radicals before them. Troops had been called out, but stood by while the Tories ran amok, although they intervened to prevent the ransacking of Papineau's house. No such delicacy was shown when the crowd demo-

³⁹ Gosford to Glenelg, 6 November 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, vol. 39, pp. 410-12.

⁴⁰ Gosford to Glenelg, 9 November 1837, *ibid.*, Enclosures 1 and 2, p. 419.

ished the interior of the Vindicator offices.⁴¹

But physical abuse alone did not satisfy the opponents of liberty. The Montreal Gazette commented regretfully on 9 November:

Notwithstanding the destruction of property which it was reported had been committed in the office of the Vindicator, during the excitement occasioned by the wanton and unprovoked attack made on Monday by the friends and supporters of that journal, we find that it is still forthcoming; and that yesterday it was published as usual, with the exception of one page only. The account which it contains of the proceedings of Monday, does not surprise us, but we cannot refrain from expressing our regret that any contemporary, whatever may be its political opinions, should so far deviate from the truth, as the Vindicator has done on the present occasion, when there are so many respectable wit-

⁴¹ The Solicitor-General to Gosford, 7 November 1837, *ibid.*, pp. 420-21, and Senior, pp. 44-51. Brown received a severe head wound: Lieutenant-Colonel Wetherall to Gosford, 6 November 1837; *ibid.* pp. 421-22. He commented that "the feeling is English versus French." The Solicitor General's report was succinct: "The patriotes ["Sons of Liberty"] met, to the number of about 350, in a large opening in Great St. James' street, near the American Presbyterian Church. They had their speeches, and their huzzas, and their treason in private, the gate of the yard being shut. A number of Constitutionals were outside. Stones were thrown into the yard, and towards the close of the meeting grown-up boys were seen pushing sticks under the gate. An English flag was also carried about. The patriotes broke out and drove the Constitutionalists before them towards the Bank, breaking the windows of Dr. Robertson *en passant*. They continued moving on victorious until they reached nearly opposite the Court-house. Here the Constitutionalists, having been reinforced by the Doric Club, made a stand and drove back their assailants in their turn as far as the Place d'Armes, from which the latter made their escape into the suburb. The troops then came out, and the Doric Club having dispersed, they followed the rioters, who kept in small bodies, through the suburbs. Parties of the Doric now assembled, broke some of the windows in Mr. Papineau's house, and then proceeded to the office of the "Vindicator", the interior of which they demolished before the troops could return. T.S. Brown is said to be dangerously ill."

nesses able to bear testimony, to the contrary.⁴²

But it was the Vindicator's last hurrah. Papineau would later call it "le papier le mieux qu'il y eut dans la Province."⁴³ It had tried mightily to unite French and non-French in a reform alliance, but, like

⁴² Montreal Gazette, 9 November 1837. See also the Quebec Gazette, 10 November 1837. Amédée Papineau gave an account of the sacking of the Vindicator very different from that of the government: "De chez nous les furieux se rendirent à l'imprimerie du Vindicator. Et comme ce qu'ils venaient de faire n'était que la prélude, n'était que pour monter l'esprit & le courage de leurs gens, & qu'il fallait détruire entièrement la Presse Libérale, ils se munirent de haches, & autres instruments, plus actifs que des pierres & bâtons.... Lorsque les toriés y arrivèrent, Mr. Louis Perrault, Propriétaire du Journal, venait de laisser la maison avec sa famille. Les furieux brisèrent les contrevents et portes de fer, & se firent jour dans l'imprimerie. Ils enforcèrent les bureaux & les armoires, & jetèrent tout ce qu'ils purent y trouver, avec les presses, papiers & caractères, dans la rue. Il y avait là plusieurs magistrats. On demanda leur protection, & ils la refusèrent. Le journal était libéral, et comme vous le savez, il n'entre pas dans leur code de moralité "loyale" de protéger les propriétés des libéraux." (lettre d'un monsieur anglais, témoin oculaire). Si je ne me trompe, c'est M. Henri Desrivières, magistrat, qui se transporta au Corps de garde du Marché Neuf, & demanda au Capitaine du poste de se rendre [sic] à l'imprimerie afin de la protéger. Aussitôt 6 soldats s'offrirent d'eux-même pour y aller. L'officier les en reprit, & dit au magistrat d'aller demander au Colonel. Et où le trouver ce Colonel?... Les toriés auraient eu auparavant le temps de détruire vingt imprimeries!--C'est un fait constant, connu de tout Montréal, & avoué par les autorités elles-mêmes, que pendant une heure que durèrent ces bris de maisons & autres déprédations, il y avait des troupes stationnées sur le Champ de Mars, la Place St-Jacques, & ailleurs, & des piquets parcourant les rues. Ces piquets parcouraient toutes les rues, excepté celles où la populace travaillait à son oeuvre dévastatrice.... Les troupes étaient là, toutes prêtes, avec des bayonnettes, du plomb, & de la mitraille, pour protéger...? Les destructeurs, & massacrer le Peuple s'il était venu chasser les brigands!!!" Amédée Papineau, Journal d'un Fils de la Liberté, 2 vols., (n.p.:n.d.; reprint ed., vol. 1: Montreal: Réédition Québec, 1972; vol. 2: Montreal: l'Étincelle, 1978), pp. 62-63.

⁴³ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 28 October 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 2. He wrote: "en 1837 le Vindicator était le papier le mieux qu'il y eut dans la Province et sa souscription très large."

the Northern Star in Ireland in 1797, it had now been silenced.⁴⁴ O'Callaghan had made it a formidable weapon in the patriote arsenal and had raised its circulation from 700 to 2,000 during his tenure as editor.⁴⁵ His pen had now been snatched from his hand, and a sword offered in its place. It was a strange, unwieldy weapon for a man of words.

O'Callaghan had been brought up to hate the English for what they had done to Ireland, and he transferred his hate quite easily across the Atlantic. Naturally, his fervour was heightened when he saw an apparent repetition of the oppression of his own native land. The Vindicator was the answer to his dreams. As Joseph Schull comments, he gave the paper a "shriller voice" than it had had before.⁴⁶ O'Callaghan, while anxious to reach other English-speaking readers, aimed first and foremost to attract an Irish audience, and kept his readers in touch with the pulse of Hibernian radical nationalism. He admired O'Connell, and undoubtedly saw Papineau as his reflection, as indeed the latter did also. He strove continuously to make his countrymen see the parallel between British "tyranny" in Ireland and Lower Canada, and thus to rouse them to support the patriote cause. The Vindicator and its French counterpart La Minerve gave the patriotes two very powerful weapons in the war of

⁴⁴ The nationalities of advertisers in the Vindicator indicates clearly the paper's influence within both French and non-French communities: see appendix I.

⁴⁵ L.-J. Papineau to D.-B. Viger, 1 July 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2 3; 4417: "le Vindicator n'avait que 700 souscripteurs quand O'Callaghan en a pris la rédaction et qu'il en avait 2000 quand le violence l'a détruit."

⁴⁶ Schull, p. 38.

words which preceded the rebellion.⁴⁷ And O'Callaghan certainly played his part well. Joseph Schull well sums up the end of the doctor's political career, as he was confronted by talk of battle strategy:

"O'Callaghan had little to say. For five years he had said it all in Vindicator, flaying the oligarchy, calling the people to arms....The meagre, spectacled, waspish little man had lost his occupation with his type and his presses. He seemed to have lost his sting."⁴⁸

Events now moved swiftly. On 13 November Gosford relieved seventy-one magistrates in Montreal and appointed twenty-seven new ones.⁴⁹ On the same day Papineau and O'Callaghan, aware that warrants were about to be issued for their arrests, left the city together.⁵⁰ A patriote wrote of the occasion:

I left Montreal for St. Charles on the evening of the 13th, at night fall. In Longuepointe I sent back my carrier and walked to Pointe-aux-Trembles. I was to wait there in an indicated house for two other fugitives whose names I wasn't told. I had the pleasure to meet L.J. Papineau and Dr. O'Callaghan. On that very same night we left together in a canoe for Varennes.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Many Canadiens could not read. J. Normandin deposed that: "La propaganda se faisait dans les assemblées publiques au grand air ou dans la salle paroissiale" où l'on nous lisoit la Minerve, le Vindicator et le Populaire. Le Dr. Bouthillier, le curé de la paroisse M. Crevier nous lisoient ces journeaux." Cited in Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 414 (note 22). This again was very similar to the Irish situation in 1798.

⁴⁸ Schull, p. 68.

⁴⁹ Fauteux, p. 36.

⁵⁰ Fernand Ouellet, "Louis-Joseph Papineau: A Divided Soul," CHA Booklet, no. 11 (Ottawa, 1968), p. 15.

⁵¹ "A Few Observations On the Political Events of 1837 In Canada," Prison of Montreal, March 1838, D.-B. Viger Papers, PAC, MG24-B6, 6: 2820-73.

In a despatch dated the next day Gosford once again offered his resignation.⁵² And on the fifteenth Amury Girod recorded in his journal that while at Varennes he was with other patriotes in a house when called to the door:

I found there 1st O'Callaghan, trembling, with cold, I think with uneasiness also, he wore a very elegant surtout, his head was concealed by an immense red shawl, which formed a singular contrast with the paleness of his face.--2nd Papineau in a Capote, but presenting, a marked difference in his appearance from the former; because, he was tranquil, composed, and, although allowing nothing to escape his attention, he manifested not the slightest symptom of apprehension. After the ordinary compliments, they informed me that the Governor had fulminated warrants against me, and others, as accused of High Treason; and they required that I should go, with them, to seek a shelter, from the impending danger.⁵³

The group considered calling a convention and establishing a provisional government, as well as organizing the people and procuring arms. Amury Girod was put in charge in the north, with his headquarters at St. Eustache. It was decided that O'Callaghan, who was extremely fatigued, and Papineau would proceed to St. Denis and meet with Wolfred Nelson. The two then left in a carriage, the doctor having paid the men who had brought them there by canoe five shillings, one of them to allay their suspicions.⁵⁴

⁵² Gosford to Glenelg, 14 November 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 423.

⁵³ Amury Girod, "Journal," translated from the German and Italian, in Durham Papers, p. 370.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Thus the two rebels had escaped Gosford's order for the arrest of twenty-six patriote leaders for treason and sedition on 16 November. This final move by the authorities brought the commencement of open hostilities. S.D. Clark comments on this act: "Whether rebellion would have taken place had the government not attempted to arrest the patriot leaders there is no way of knowing."⁵⁵ As in Ireland in 1798, the people had been driven to the point of desperation and their leaders arrested or driven into hiding. Now they exploded. And, like the rebels across the ocean forty years earlier, they had no chance of success. Indeed, their futile gesture would only facilitate the total victory of their opponents and the union of their province with Upper Canada, a result which mirrored the joining of Ireland to England in 1801.

By 17 November the doctor and the Speaker of the Assembly were conferring with Wolfred Nelson at St. Denis.⁵⁶ That same day saw the successful ambush of some militia at Longueuil, the first shot being fired by a patriote named Patrick Murray.⁵⁷ But the patriote cause had lost many moderate supporters. LaFontaine even went to offer his cooperation to Gosford, but was refused. He had said: "Papineau is lost and must be sacrificed."⁵⁸ And Denis-Benjamin Viger, Papineau's cousin, signed a proclamation urging the habitants to avoid the use of

⁵⁵ Clark, Movements, p. 307.

⁵⁶ Schull, p. 61.

⁵⁷ Elinor Senior, p. 55, Fauteux, p. 38.

⁵⁸ Girod, p. 373.

violence--perhaps to ensure the family's fortunes.⁵⁹ Papineau and O'Callaghan, meanwhile, were still at St. Denis. There they would walk among the people, and talk with them, especially in the evening. They were staying at Wolfred Nelson's house with Dr. René Kimber and Colonel Weir, a prisoner who was later shot by the patriotes while trying to escape. On the 18th T.S. Brown, recovered from his injuries of the 6th, arrived at St. Charles to confer with Papineau, O'Callaghan and Nelson.⁶⁰ According to the military historian Elinor Senior they decided to use St. Charles as bait to lure government forces from Montreal and trap them in the countryside once the weather turned cold--but it was to be a late winter.⁶¹ Brown was put in charge, but Papineau and O'Callaghan had to return on the 22nd to bolster his authority.⁶²

The British, meanwhile, were preparing an assault on the patriote defenses along the Richelieu. With the weather still fine, the troops arrived near St. Denis on 23 November. Papineau and O'Callaghan, according to Charles Dansereau, retired alone to an upper room after breakfast, conferring only with E.-R. Fabre on one occasion. At about ten-thirty, after the British bombardment had begun, they descended,

⁵⁹ Elinor Senior, pp. 62-63.

⁶⁰ Thomas Storrow Brown Papers, PAC, MG24-C11: account of his part in the Rebellion of 1837: p. 4.

⁶¹ Elinor Senior, pp. 66-67, contends that the patriotes had formulated a plan early in November to stage "a general uprising in the countryside" which would "precede a move on the garrison towns and the capital." Ibid., p. 40.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 67-71.

mounted two horses and rode off.⁶³ The two eventually arrived at Papineau's brother's home at St. Hyacinthe. The patriotes managed to drive off the British from St. Denis, and Papineau and O'Callaghan then joined T.S. Brown at St. Charles. They approved of his dispositions, but once again they departed before the battle, possibly disguised as monks, and watched the rebel defeat and the burning of the town on 25 November from across the river.⁶⁴ O'Callaghan then accompanied Papineau once again to St. Hyacinthe, where they remained for several days. Finally they fled south and crossed Missisquoi Bay into the United States.⁶⁵ Both later went on to Albany where they were joined by many other fugitive leaders.⁶⁶ Thus neither Papineau nor O'Callaghan participated in any of the fighting--not only did they not fire a shot in anger, but they were not present on any field of battle, neither as officers nor even as advisors. They provided no real leadership and little if any inspiration to the patriotes who were about to

⁶³ Déclaration de Charles Dansereau, Wolfred Nelson Papers, PAC, MG24-B34, 1: 47-53. See also Roy, pp. 145-46. It was later asserted that "a paper was drawn up and signed in 1837 whilst we were at St. Denis purporting to be, or equivalent to a Declaration of Independence." O'Callaghan denied this in a letter to Papineau: "All the writings that were drawn up at St. Denis passed through my hands; and were a paper of the grave character, here referred to, I should not fail to remember it." He went on: "I am satisfied there was no such paper or Document drawn up or signed by me, or by you to my knowledge. I can add that did you sign such a paper I could not but know of it." He added that "some of those who seem now in Canada the most Loyal" were, in 1838, "desirous (whilst sojourning in this State) to have such a Declaration drawn up and promulgated" but Papineau, in O'Callaghan's presence, refused: O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 20 December 1848, Papineau Papers, ANQ, no. 737.

⁶⁴ Schull, pp. 69, 89; Fauteux, Introduction, pp. 40-42; Rumilly, Papineau, p. 516; Elinor Senior, p. 101.

⁶⁵ Rumilly, Papineau, pp. 516-37; Schull, p. 89.

⁶⁶ Guy, p. 25.

lay their lives on the line for the cause which they had so long espoused.

It was not an edifying performance, and it did not sit well with some other patriotes. The reason, or excuse, given was that Papineau was too valuable a symbol of resistance to risk. According to Papineau's nephew, Louis-Antoine Dessaulles, who was with them at the time, it was Nelson who insisted that Papineau leave St. Denis. O'Callaghan, he said, expressed indifference on the subject--if Papineau stayed, he would stay; if he left, he would accompany him.⁶⁷

While O'Callaghan may well have been physically afraid (he was no soldier), Papineau had been an officer in the militia, and it seems unlikely that cowardice was the sole cause of their behavior; rather, both men would seem to have been in a state of shock, unable to believe that events had actually reached such an unpleasant denouement. The words and behavior of both men make it difficult to escape the conclusion, unlikely as it may seem at first glance, that neither was at all expecting an armed conflict. Secure in their political and social positions, these were not at all the type of desperate characters likely to be willing to risk all on a test of arms for which they and their supporters were unprepared, both militarily and psychologically. Even the

⁶⁷ Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 511-12. Whatever was the source of his knowledge of events, Mackenzie was appalled by Papineau's flight, and compared it to Dr. John Rolph's behavior in Upper Canada. According to Mackenzie, "It was only when the fighting was over, Perrault killed, and Nelson came back that he found Papineau had fled without bidding him good bye." Memorandum in W.L. Mackenzie's handwriting about Dr. W. Nelson, Dr. E.B. O'Callaghan and L.-J. Papineau at St. Denis, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, no. 6092 (undated). Elinor Senior (pp. 84-85) argues that they were trying to direct reinforcements, which Nelson had requested of Brown, to the battle. They spent a miserable day in the cold, only seeking refuge at St. Hyacinthe in the evening.

far more mercurial Lord Edward Fitzgerald, certainly a man of substance, had at least made preparations for revolt in 1798, and the United Irish and Defenders had been organized. The patriotes of Lower Canada in 1837 were ready for nothing more serious than a Sunday parade. And, as in Ireland in 1798, the authorities had been both frightened by their opponents' sedition, and aware of their present deficiencies. Thus they had forced a showdown when only they were prepared for it. Patriote leaders like Papineau and O'Callaghan had apparently not expected such an outcome.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the revolt was ending in catastrophe. The defeat at St. Charles had doomed the patriote cause along the Richelieu, but the forces under Girod north of Montreal were still intact. On 14 December the patriotes were, with great difficulty, routed at St. Eustache, losing seventy dead. The town was destroyed. The next day the now leaderless and surrounded remnants of the rebel force surrendered at St. Benôit, while on 16 December another 300 laid down their arms at Ste. Scholastique.⁶⁸ Thus by 26 December the Montreal Gazette announced that the rebellion had been crushed,⁶⁹ and on the next day the Quebec Gazette trumpeted: "In Lower Canada, we believe, there is not a man in arms against the government at the present moment."⁷⁰ Papineau, O'Callaghan and many other patriote leaders were by then exiles in the United States. Most of the others were prisoners. The Earl of Gosford's resignation as Governor had been

⁶⁸ Fauteux, Introduction, pp. 42-52.

⁶⁹ Montreal Gazette, 26 December 1837.

⁷⁰ Quebec Gazette, 27 December 1837.

accepted and he would be replaced temporarily by Sir John Colborne, and in the spring of the new year by Lord Durham.⁷¹ The play was over: new characters with a new script, one written by British bureaucrats, Tories and "moderate" reformers, were about to take over the stage. But for the old cast of patriotes, the tragedy had just begun.

The rebellion itself involved the participation of three classes: the small-scale commercial and professional middle classes, and the rural masses.⁷² The former wanted social recognition, political power and the economic advantages to be gained by dispossessing the English, motives similar to those of the Irish middle-class rebels in 1798.⁷³ The professionals were jealous of the English bureaucrats.⁷⁴ Fernand Ouellet states: "En réalité, le phénomène révolutionnaire était d'abord l'expression de la montée et du besoin d'affirmation des classes moyennes canadiennes-françaises."⁷⁵ The small farmers and day-labourers were driven to revolt by a series of circumstances. They had been relatively prosperous until insect attack, combined with the exhaustion of the unrotated soil and shrinking farming units, led to failure of the wheat crop which began in 1833 and peaked in the years

⁷¹ Glenelg to Gosford, 27 November 1837, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 409; Glenelg to Sir John Colborne, 27 November 1837, ibid., p. 410; Glenelg to Gosford, 23 December 1837, ibid., p. 423.

⁷² See appendices K, L, M and O.

⁷³ Fernand Ouellet, "Les Insurrections de 1837-38: un phénomène social," Histoire Sociale/Social History, no. 2, November 1968, in Michiel Horn and Ronald Sabourin, Studies in Canadian Social History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974) pp. 405-8.

⁷⁴ W.H. Parker, "A New Look at Unrest in Lower Canada in the 1830's," CHR, 1959, p. 216. Lower Canada was producing more educated Canadiens than it could absorb.

⁷⁵ Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 405.

from 1835 to 1837. This also hurt the economies of the surrounding towns and ports involved in the wheat trade. At the same time, the population was increasing, rents were rising, and there was no additional seigneurial land available. This naturally resulted in subdivision among sons, and, as in Ireland in 1798, certain rural areas were drastically overpopulated. At the same time, the available lands in the Eastern Townships were under the control of a land company which O'Callaghan frequently denounced as corrupt. Moreover, as in Ireland, many of the landlords raising the rents were English.⁷⁶ The areas worst hit by the wheat failure were the lands around Montreal and along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River below Quebec City, the same areas from which most of the rebels derived.⁷⁷

It was, as in the Ireland of 1798, the rural masses that made up the bulk of the revolutionary forces, and, while the high command was composed of lawyers, notaries, doctors and merchants, most of the local leaders were farmers and artisans.⁷⁸ Many of the latter wanted more than responsible government: they wanted the abolition of tithes and seigneurial obligations: most of the middle-class leaders, however, shunned or even loathed such radical action. This was a dichotomy similar to that of 1798 in Ireland.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Parker, pp. 209-15. See also Schull, pp. 31-3; Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 400.

⁷⁷ Parker, pp. 209-10.

⁷⁸ Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," pp. 398-99.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 401-6, 412, argues that the middle-class leaders feared the development of an advanced capitalist economy and so did not want the destruction of the old order. But they would under any circumstances reject the levelling instincts of the masses.

Another factor which entered the picture was the fear of immigration felt by many land-hungry Canadien peasants. They wanted the lands being settled by English, Irish and Americans. Moreover, after the cholera epidemic of 1832 had killed 8,000 people in Montreal and Quebec, some even suspected that the Irish immigrants were being introduced by the British in order to wipe out the Canadiens with their diseases. This feeling was abetted by the actions of English merchants who, anxious for fares, had crossed and landed anyone--healthy or not.⁸⁰ This explains the attitude of one Canadian farmer who said: "s'ils avoient réussi à s'emparer de Laprarie, ils n'auroient pas laissé vivants, sans distinction de sexe ni d'âge, un seule habitant anglois, irlandois et écossois [sic]."⁸¹

In his account of the rebellion, published in 1839, Papineau emphasized the parallels between the Canadian and Irish situations. Both nations had the inalienable rights of British subjects which, he said, were made a mockery of in colonies such as Ireland and Canada, where the "serfs," he wrote, "veulent cesser d'être corvéables, taillables, mort-taillables à merci et miséricorde."⁸² Overall, then, the situation was deplorable:

Corruption systématique, pécunats honteux, antipathies contre les peuples, exemples révoltants d'irresponsabilité dans les agents du pouvoir,

⁸⁰ Schull, pp. 29-30.

⁸¹ L. Lavoie, November 1836, cited in Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 403. It was also thought wise by some to strangle all the Jews: *ibid.*, p. 409.

⁸² Louis-Joseph Papineau, Histoire de l'Insurrection au Canada (Paris: Revue du progrès, 1839; reprint ed. Ottawa: Editions Lemeac, 1968), p. 47.

accaprement du domaine public, rien ne manque à ce tableau des misères du Canada, tableau tellement hideux que son pendant ne pourrait être fourni que par l'histoire d'une autre possession anglaise, l'Irlande.⁸³

Certainly many Irish Canadians, not least of them O'Callaghan, were also struck by the parallels.

Fernand Ouellet contends that the rebellion failed because many of the middle-class leaders, either through cowardice or fear of the masses that they had aroused, betrayed the movement.⁸⁴ This is, of course, not dissimilar to developments in Ireland in 1798. Many leaders lay low, or fled to the United States. Even Papineau and O'Callaghan seemed perplexed. Both believed there was another parallel to the Ireland of 1798, although their argument can be seen as self-serving. Papineau stated that he had not contemplated armed resistance, but had been driven to it by the actions of the government in subverting the constitution and then proclaiming martial law.⁸⁵ And O'Callaghan reached the same conclusion within days of his flight. In a letter to Henry Chapman of 15 December 1837 he outlined his contention that, once the people had decided to boycott trade, the government responded by dismissing their magistrates and militia officers. At the meeting of the six counties, the people resolved to elect their own magistrates and

⁸³ Ibid., p. 48.

⁸⁴ Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," pp. 411-12. Dr. Côté in his Journal claimed that there were four traitors among the patriotes: Papineau, LaFontaine, Chartier and Dr. Brien: "Brief Sketch of the affairs of Canada which lead to the trouble of 1837 and 1838 - drawn up by Rt. S.M. Bouchette and Wolfred Nelson on board Her Majesty's ship Vestal on their way to Bermuda," Nelson Papers, PAC, MG24-B34, 1: 41.

⁸⁵ Papineau, p. 46.

militia officers, "somewhat after the plan recommended by O'Connell to the people of Ireland." The meeting was held near a "Liberty Pole" previously erected, but "nothing occurred at the meeting different from what had taken place since the month of May at the several county meetings throughout the province. But,

...the Government in Canada fearful that the Revenue would be seriously diminished; perceiving that it could not gain over the majority of the House of Assembly, and perceiving plainly that its own authority was defunct in the District of Montreal, immediately determined to hurry the people into physical resistance in order to crush the opposition and to get rid of those men in the House of Assembly who had hitherto opposed Downing Street and its measures.

The result, he argued, was the attack by Tories on the Sons of Liberty, who were meeting peacefully, the closing of four liberal newspapers, and the issuing of warrants for reform journalists and for members of the Assembly and others who had attended the St. Charles meeting. Yet, "nothing had been done at this meeting to warrant a charge of High Treason. ...The plan, however, was to destroy the opposition in the House of Assembly." Troops were then sent about the Montreal district arresting suspects, which angered the people and resulted in the rescue of some prisoners at Longueuil.

The people along the Richelieu gathered to defend their local leaders, who were threatened with arrest, for they feared that they would be taken away and tried far from home, where a "packed" jury would convict them--for, O'Callaghan pointed out, there was "no law for the

⁸⁶ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 15 December 1837, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-831, 1: 25-28.

impartial choosing of Juries." In order to save their leaders, then, from "certain destruction," the habitants gathered at St. Denis and St. Charles to resist the troops. Nevertheless,

Neillson and the other Tory papers exclaim that the people are or were in a state of rebellion, and that they were urged thus far by their Leaders. Nothing can be more false....The resistance of the people consisted merely in the grateful impulse of friends, and neighbours to protect men who had been defending their liberties for a number of years.⁸⁷

But the government threw the blame on the Assembly members who had made themselves "peculiarly obnoxious to Downing Street by their opposition to the measures of Master Stephen, Glenelg & Russell." The government then offered rewards for the capture of Papineau and others, and declared martial law in the District of Montreal "where there is not an armed man I believe, to oppose their arbitrary power."⁸⁸ All this was the result of Russell's Resolutions, which

...brought resistance--temporary and partial resistance it is true, but a resistance extremely dangerous if not fatal to the connection. The people of Lower Canada who have hitherto fought by the side of British troops have at length met and beat them in deadly fight. This was a dangerous lesson to have taught the people. They will never forget it. For my own part I believe the revolution begun which a redress of grievances a few months ago would have warded off and now where it will stop God in his wisdom only knows.⁸⁹

O'Callaghan would alter his version of events very little over the years.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid.

Of course one cannot dismiss all of the words and actions of the patriotes. Some, like Wolfred Nelson, Dr. Côté and T.S. Brown seem to have wanted a rebellion in November 1837. Others, like Papineau and O'Callaghan, preferred to use pressure tactics, at least until the radicals were ready for revolt, with the St. Lawrence frozen over and American assistance at their disposal.⁹⁰ Some historians, in fact, argue that Papineau was planning a general uprising by November of 1837, and that the convention planned for Montreal on 4 December was to be the start of a revolution.⁹¹ Thus Jesse Lloyd, who was Mackenzie's ambassador to Papineau, reported on 9 October that the "word from the patriotes was that the hour for a brave stroke of liberty" had arrived.⁹² Mackenzie was asked to strike with them, and consequently began planning an uprising in Upper Canada. The evidence for this is somewhat tenuous, however, and certainly, if he was planning a revolution, Papineau was doing so in a very off-hand manner.⁹³ But

⁹⁰ Clark, Movements, pp. 301, 305, 307-8.

⁹¹ Ouellet, Lower Canada, pp. 302-3 argues this case very strongly. See also Elinor Senior, pp. 39-40.

⁹² Kilbourn, p. 154.

⁹³ Even Ouellet, Lower Canada, p. 302, is forced to admit that the patriotes were caught unprepared by the government's move against them. Papineau wrote to Mackenzie in February 1838 that he should not so blame the rich of Lower Canada for their failure to arm the people, because most of their property was immovable and thus not liquid, and, moreover, had an attempt to arm the people been made earlier, "the war against the people would have begun earlier because it was impossible to do it in secret." (cited in *ibid.*) Certainly some of the patriotes were contemplating a violent uprising--perhaps even Papineau was--but this does not diminish the fact that the British helped provoke the rebellion that actually occurred, just as they did in Ireland in 1798, where there is no doubt that the United Irish were planning to overthrow the government.

even if some such plan was contemplated, it remains true that the government was responsible for much of the unrest by its treatment of the Canadiens, and almost certainly did provoke an actual armed uprising in the fall of 1837 rather than face a better prepared enemy later. Mason Wade remarks that the patriotes were "driven to open rebellion by Tory provocation and by the government's adoption of repressive measures."⁹⁴ And S.D. Clark states succinctly: "The Lower Canadian population rose in rebellion against the government more as an act of desperation than as a deliberate effort to secure its liberation."⁹⁵ Just as in Ireland in 1798, the people had been goaded by the authorities into a desperate rebellion and were willing to fight, however ill-prepared, even when abandoned by many of their leaders.⁹⁶

To what extent the Irish actually participated in the rebellion is difficult to determine. The numbers noted as being prominent at

⁹⁴ Wade, p. 171.

⁹⁵ Clark, Movements, p. 308.

⁹⁶ George Rudé, Protest and Punishment (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), pp. 46-47, argues that William Lyon Mackenzie and his followers were also encouraged by the government to revolt prematurely: "the authorities baited a trap to provoke the militant Reformers...into precipitate action by leaving a 4,000 stack of arms virtually unguarded at Toronto City Hall. The Reformers fell for the bait and their attempt to seize the arms became the opening shot in their rebellion." Certainly Governor Bond Head said as much in a letter to General Colborne, in which he agreed to send all his regular troops to reinforce the Lower Canadian forces, and put 4,000 muskets into the safekeeping of the city of Toronto: "As soon as this conspiracy became known to me, I determined...I would allow it to work its own cure. I freely allowed the leader of the intended insurrection a full opportunity...to say what he chose, to do what he chose--to assemble his deluded adherents with loaded firearms and to make deliberate preparations for revolt." Colborne felt the same way: "You incur not the least risk...in trusting to the good feeling of the Province of Upper Canada...the demonstration which Mr. McKenzie [sic] may make on Yonge Street or in the London District will do no good." Cited by Elinor Senior, p. 34.

reform meetings tend to indicate rather limited participation.⁹⁷ Of the 108 rebels actually tried for treason, none had Irish names.⁹⁸ And among all those arrested on charges relating to the troubles of 1837-38, J.D. Borthwick counts a mere sixty-eight as English-speaking, of whom only eight seem definitely Irish, and another twelve possibly so.⁹⁹ And he lists only four English-speaking exiles: O'Callaghan, T.S. Brown, Robert Nelson and John Ryan.¹⁰⁰ Among the 2,081 names of patriotes compiled by Jean-Paul Bernard from various sources, he found only 180 non-French names, including those of twenty who lived in the United States. Thus he estimates that 7.8 percent of identifiable patriotes were non-French, although about 25 percent of those in Montreal. They were therefore grossly under-represented, since they comprised about 25 percent of the population of Lower Canada, and almost 50 percent of that

⁹⁷ See appendix J.

⁹⁸ See Fauteux.

⁹⁹ J. Douglas Borthwick, History of the Montreal Prison from AD 1784 to AD 1886, (Montreal: Periard, 1886). The list, in chronological order of the commitment, reads: "George Dillon, first English speaking Patriot arrested and sent to Jail; A.E. Barclay; Daniel Forbes; Dr. Wolfred Nelson, Wm. H. Scott; Hugh Ward; Robert McMahon; Dr. Leonard Brown; Patrick Murray; Peter O'Callighan; Neil Scott; Wm. Blyth; James Watts; Enoch Jacques; J. Murphy; Wm Allan; Patrick Flanagan; Hugh Feenan; Wm. Whitlock; Michael Dwyer; Donald George Morrison; A. Charles Brady; John Henry Bates; Daniel Wolfred; Captain Taylor Wadley; John Squires; James Johnson; Joseph Hensley; James Perrigo; George Putman; Stephen Reeves; Freeman Miller; Henry Newcomb; John McDonald; L.J. Haskin; John Donegan; John Fullum; Charles Dewitt; Moses Dalton; Isaac Negus; John H. Webster; Patrick Hays; George Catman; Charles Hindelang; Benjamin Mott; Dr. Samuel Newcomb; Wm. Dalton; Thomas Dalton; Marc Campbell; Joseph Smith; Thos. J. Sutherland; Squire Thayer; Heron R. Culver; Ab. W. Patridge; Nathan Smith; Benjamin F. Pen; Henry L. Hull; Michael Brady; Clancy Parker; J.S. Ney Smith; John Terrill; John Willing; Peter Reid; Francis Reid; Charles Bone; Richard Dillon; Alexander Ashley; John Anderson."

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

of Montreal. Moreover, consultation with the Irish Canadian Heritage Society convinced him that only 8 percent of non-French patriotes were Irish: 75 percent were English and 15 percent American. He concludes therefore that

Ce dernier pourcentage peut étonner: il force, à tout le moins, à questionner les affirmations sur la tendance 'antibritannique' des Irlandais du Bas-Canada à l'époque, et à approfondir la question de leur division de celle de leur place dans les effectifs anglophones de la colonie.¹⁰¹

While the non-French elements of the population were certainly under-represented, this author was able to find 250 non-French among Bernard's patriotes, and of those 20 percent were Irish.¹⁰² Clearly such estimates cannot be exact, but it does seem that Bernard is underestimating what was admittedly a rather timid performance by the Irish and other non-French Lower Canadians.

An examination of the occupations of Professor Bernard's non-French patriotes provides the kind of statistics one would expect,

¹⁰¹ Jean-Paul Bernard, Les Rebellions de 1837-1838 (Montreal: Boréal Express, 1983), pp. 323-24.

¹⁰² See appendix N and *ibid.*, pp. 284-325. Deciding the ethnicity of names can be extremely difficult, and one could not expect two independent estimates of the numbers of Irish, non-French, etc. among the patriotes listed to concur. Nonetheless, in this case the divergence seems excessive, and I can only conclude that, while I may have been too generous to the non-French and Irish, Professor Bernard seems to have been extremely narrow in his criteria (did he, for example, exclude people whose last name is evidently not French, but whose first name is, such as Antoine Curty, Antoine-Ensebe Bardy, Léon Kirouac, François Aubry, Jean-Baptiste Rose, Timothée Kinler or Charles-Gédéon Scheffer? There are many such names listed, and their exclusion may well help to explain some of the difference). As for the Irish names, the consultants must have wanted to be very careful in their choices and to have assumed that all doubtful cases were English.

with heavy representation by businessmen, artisans and professionals. Of course, one must keep in mind that these figures are for patriotes--many of whom may not have been actual rebels. Still, it is interesting to note the number of non-French who were involved outside of Montreal and Quebec City, and the significant number who were involved with agriculture. While the proportion is undoubtedly less than it was among French Canadians, participants from this sector nonetheless outnumber those involved in business or the professions!¹⁰³

Mentions of Irish participation in contemporary sources are also rare. Girod in his journal for 8 December 1837 did note, however, that some Irish rebels had broken into the house of a man named Mitchell, taken what they wanted and "Staved a Puncheon of Rum--the liquor filled the Cellar."¹⁰⁴ Later in the same day he recorded that, when already in bed, "Chammily awaked me, and reported that the Irish were killing one another. John Drougha was mortally wounded. He and his Brother were drunkards, and quarrellsome [sic].--they were both put, under arrest."¹⁰⁵ Nor is there strong evidence of Irish participation on the Loyalist side. J.I. Cooper, in reflecting upon the general, if often unenthusiastic, support of the Anglican community for the government, comments that "the Rawdon Irish turned their mission into a royalist stronghold and their chapel into a miniature fortress."¹⁰⁶ But a re-

¹⁰³ See appendix O.

¹⁰⁴ Girod, p. 380.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Cooper, The Blessed Communion, p. 36.

view of the rolls of the Missisquoi and Rouville Militias in 1837 reveals that the overwhelming majority had English names.¹⁰⁷ And while a number of Irish Roman Catholics joined the Volunteer Rifle Corps after the outbreak, there is little reason to believe that this was more than a show of loyalty in an unstable situation.¹⁰⁸ Few Irish Catholics, then, were willing to shed their blood for a British administration, while only a handful were prepared to die to overthrow it.

Durham was apparently convinced that very few English-speaking residents of Lower Canada had taken part in the rebellion and that by 1838 no more than "fifty" were still disaffected.¹⁰⁹ Mason Wade is insistent that it was not an ethnic struggle, as is evidenced by Papineau's confidence in the Nelsons, Brown and O'Callaghan.¹¹⁰ S.D. Clark, while conceding that, as the rebellion approached, "support of the reform cause fell off among certain elements of the population and the ethnic character of the reform movement became more pronounced," stresses the patriotes' appeal to the Irish of the cities and the English and Americans of the Eastern Townships and concludes that "in its appeal to a population which had no great voice in the management of economic and political affairs, it had become a party of the disenfran-

¹⁰⁷ Of the members of the Battalion of Missisquoi (militia), ready to fight rebellion on 17 November 1837, thirty-eight were definitely English or Scottish, ten French, ten Irish and twenty-one indeterminate or illegible: "Missisquoi Militia, 1837," PAC, MG24-G61, p. 1. The third Battalion of the Rouville Militia on 4 December 1837 included thirty English or Scottish members, two Irish and one French: "Rouville Militia, 1837-1838," PAC, MG24-G61.

¹⁰⁸ Elinor Senior, p. 105.

¹⁰⁹ Durham, pp. 24-5.

¹¹⁰ Wade, p. 152.

chised, of the unprivileged and underprivileged."¹¹¹ William Nolte, on the other hand, dismisses the rebellion as "the desperate, futile 'last cannon shot' of an ancient struggle" and comments: "O'Callaghan and the handful of other English-speaking rebels had joined a rebellion which was not in fact theirs."¹¹² Fernand Ouellet is contradictory: in 1961 he wrote that Papineau was supported by "the French Canadian middle class, a few English liberals, the Irish, the American-born farmers in the Eastern Townships, and the French Canadian rural classes."¹¹³ However, seven years later his tone had changed: "Ce mouvement populaire est au reste presque entièrement canadien-français. Il rallie une petite minorité d'Irlandais" and some Americans in the Eastern Townships.¹¹⁴

Undoubtedly many Irish were apprehensive about joining in rebellion with a group which at times showed great antipathy to them. As one rebel leader said: "The Scotch were disliked on account of their haughty, overbearing manners, and the Irish for their irregularities, violence, and bad faith."¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, there is no doubt that a hard core of Irish radicals, not insignificant in number, did take part. Their motives, like those of O'Callaghan, were not entirely, however, those of their Canadian allies. They remembered what the British had done to Ireland, and they had not forgiven it. J. Coward,

¹¹¹ Clark, p. 329.

¹¹² Nolte, pp. 206-207.

¹¹³ Ouellet, "Papineau," p. 13.

¹¹⁴ Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," pp. 398-9.

¹¹⁵ Cited in Wade, p. 185.

an Irish merchant in Montreal, declared: "I am a rebel and I would be one as long as there would be a Scotch rascal in this town."¹¹⁶ And Joshua Bell, a Montreal shoe seller who fought in 1837 and then fled to the United States, returned to fight at the battle of Moore's Corner carrying a banner which read: "Blood or victory. Erin go Bragh!"¹¹⁷

Still, the question remains: why was O'Callaghan able to rouse so little support among the Irish for the patriote cause during the actual rebellion when he had been able to marshal so much earlier? As mentioned before, he was contending against the feelings of isolation which Irish immigrants must have felt in a new land, as well as the growing suspicion and resentment felt for them by the French Canadians because of their importation of cholera, their competition for the same jobs, and their use of the language of the conquerors.¹¹⁸ Those who took up farming were well known, in fact, to undersell the locals in the Montreal markets.¹¹⁹ And the two groups waged the so-called "Shiners' War" for control of the labour market in the Ottawa Valley between 1835 and 1845.¹²⁰ But all of these elements, while they were increasing in importance during the period, cannot fully explain why there was such a lessening of support for O'Callaghan and his cause when the hour of

¹¹⁶ Cited in Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 398-9.

¹¹⁷ Fauteux, pp. 106-7.

¹¹⁸ See Maguire, p. 99, and Keep, p. 48.

¹¹⁹ J.E. Alexander, Transatlantic Sketches, vol 2 (1833), p. 213, cited in Adams, p. 354.

¹²⁰ Michael S. Cross, "The Shiners' War," CHR, 1973, and Michael S. Cross, "The London Community of Upper Canada, 1815-1867," in J.M. Bumsted, ed., Canadian History before Confederation (Georgetown, Ontario: Irwin-Dorsey, 1972; reprint ed., 1979), pp. 297-317.

decision was at hand. To understand this phenomenon, one must turn one's attention to three other factors: the rôle of the clergy, the nature of Irish support and the dispositions of the government and its Tory supporters.

A number of priests had placed themselves at the head of their rebel parishoners during the Irish Rebellion of 1798 despite the condemnation of the movement by the hierarchy, and such leadership was important to a people who cherished their Catholicism as a badge of national identity. But there were few such clerics in Canada in 1837, and only one of them was Irish. The attitude of most of the clergy was extremely conservative. This was not surprising, since the Church in Quebec was in an advantageous position, recognized and accepted by the British, whereas the Irish Catholic Church in 1798 was barely tolerated by the government. O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau as early as March of that fateful year:

It seems to me at present that the clergy are beginning either to be very great friends of the administration or to be frightened about the French Revolution of which Parent has been lately writing. The Political Societies of Quebec marched in Procession to St. Patrick's Church in that city on Friday last, and although the Bishop (as I am informed) stated sometime ago that no service would be permitted on that day in that church, but that it would be sung on the following Sunday in the Parish Church, yet now, it seems, there was a Splendid Service at McMahon's chapel, and that the Bishop of Sidyme sung Mass. The Military band assisted playing National airs, whilst the flags of the Societies hung on the inside of the Church.¹²¹

¹²¹ O'Callaghan to Papineau, 21 March 1837, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2287.

During the summer and fall, Lartigue and most of the curés of the province enjoined upon their "flocks" the importance of loyalty. Nor were the patriotes unaware of the threat to their position. The Quebec Gazette editorialized on 9 August with much satisfaction:

The papers of the Papineau faction are expressing much dissatisfaction against the Catholic Clergy, since the Bishop of Montreal intimated to his clergy assembled, that in the present aspect of public affairs it was more necessary than ever for them to enforce the precept: "Fear God; honour the King." "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, &c.;" some of them affect to disbelieve that the Bishop made the recommendation ascribed to him.¹²²

It went on to justifiably point out that the patriotes should have expected this from the clergy, which had so clearly denounced all rebels during the troubles of 1775-76. And when the fighting began, Father McMahon in Québec City and Father Phelan in Montreal strongly opposed any participation in it by the Irish.¹²³ This was undoubtedly an important factor in suppressing whatever thoughts of revolt some Irish Catholics in the cities may well have harboured. And it is not surprising that O'Callaghan, while he practiced Catholicism, was not overly friendly with some members of the Lower Canadian clergy at the time. It was of course clerical interference in politics, and not necessarily any feelings against religion or the clergy, that infuriated the patriotes.

At the same time the Tories had waged a spirited campaign during the months preceding the rebellion to sow dissension among the patriotes and to play upon the suspicions of both the Irish and the Canadiens so

¹²² Quebec Gazette, 9 August 1837, p. 2.

¹²³ Maguire, p. 98. See Nolte, p. 207.

as to undermine the coalition which O'Callaghan and his predecessors, Waller and Tracey, as well as Papineau and many other French-Canadian reformers, had spent so many years working to solidify. The factors which naturally caused friction between the two communities, as well as the common language shared by the Irish, Scots and English, were emphasized by the Tories. Just as the government and its Orange allies in Ireland in 1798 had used sectarianism to divide the people, so in Lower Canada the bogey of language was initiated into the struggle. The lords of the mill claimed, during elections or times of crisis, some strange affinity with the labouring Irishman of Point St. Charles, whose interests, it was claimed, were inimical to those of his French-Canadian neighbor. This tactic was employed with some success during the election of 1834, and it formed one of the bases of Tory politics in the province during the following decades.

Nor is it surprising that the language barrier should be such an effective tool in the hands of the Tories, because the Irish immigrants represented, as mentioned earlier, a severe economic threat to the working class French Canadians in the towns and the lumber camps of the Ottawa Valley, where they competed for the same jobs.¹²⁴ In fact, the organization of the Irish, their cohesiveness and violence, allowed them to win the so called "Shiners' War" and drive the Canadiens from the lumber camps by the early 1840's. In the towns they were often prepared to accept lower wages or worse working conditions, and as petty mer-

¹²⁴ It is interesting to speculate on the effect that working for an English boss, especially if he was a Tory, might have on an Irish, or even a French-Canadian, worker. Would he be more likely to support the patriotes if he worked for an odious Tory, or would fear tend to keep him at least neutral?

chants or farmers they would undersell their competitors. In effect, they were used to a lower standard of living, and were therefore willing to accept less for their labour or their products. The rural Irish, moreover, took possession of lands in the Montreal area, the Eastern Townships, and even the Gaspé, that would otherwise have been available to French Canadians. Their organization and violence also helped them dominate certain electoral districts, thus posing a further threat to the French Canadians, whose only source of power was electoral. And, as discussed at length, the Irish at times brought diseases with them which killed French Canadians in large numbers. There were therefore many reasons for the French Canadians to suspect or dislike the Irish, and the Tories knew, and used, every one of them. Some of the more nationalistic patriotes, moreover, were wont at times to stir up animosity against the English-speaking elements of the population, and this would obviously dampen the revolutionary ardour of liberal Irishmen.

And any last flicker was effectively extinguished by the combination of the urban nature of Irish support for reform and the concentration of large numbers of British troops and Tory sympathizers in the same locales. It has been pointed out before that it was the Irish of Montreal and Quebec who were the cadres of O'Callaghan's support, and it was in the Montreal district and along the Richelieu Valley that support for the rebellion was centered. The Irish elsewhere were no more likely to rise than their French-Canadian neighbors, since their economic condition did not warrant such action. But there were few Irish in the latter district, and in the former Gosford and Colborne had marshalled their forces. Just as in Ireland in 1798, where no serious outbreak occurred in the Dublin area despite a strong United Irish presence before the Rebellion, so in Montreal all was quiet after the riot of 6 Novem-

ber. And in both cases a major reason was simply the concentration there of overwhelming military force. The Sons of Liberty were easily scattered by a Tory crowd under the complaisant eyes of the garrison, and any further attempt could only have had a similar result. It must be remembered that there was no rising of French Canadians in the city either, and it is just as well, because with their lack of arms and organization, the patriotes could only have served as martyrs to a lost cause.

Had the rebellion achieved greater success elsewhere, and thus forced the British to denude the city of troops, a massive outbreak might well have occurred, just as it probably would have in Dublin in 1798, and have been fiercely resisted--for, to capture Montreal or Quebec in Lower Canada, or Dublin or Belfast in Ireland, was to transform rebellion into imminent revolution and to face the British with the definite prospect of a humiliating defeat. Such an end to an insurrection which they had, if not openly invited, at least watched approach with equanimity, would have been ironic indeed.

But it was not to be. The patriotes had sown the wind not with armed men and planned strategies, but with ephemeral words and incandescent dreams. Now they must reap the whirlwind of defeat and disgrace, and then, worse, live in the conservative calm which would follow the brief fall storms of 1837 and 1838. For romantic idealists like Papineau and O'Callaghan, this was not foreseen and was scarcely bearable. For such men this end must be blamed on the perfidy of the British authorities, and the scheming and betrayal of some of their allies.

CHAPTER VII

CONSPIRATOR

1838

I have been knocked about considerably these months past & [am] quite uncertain as to the future.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1838¹

As a young man Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan had left the land of his birth for a new home in Lower Canada. He had managed to establish himself there, first as a practicing medical doctor in Quebec City, then as a politician and journalist in Montreal. Now a man of forty, a childless widower, he found himself an exile in the United States. During his first year there his energies were divided between hopes and plans for a successful revolution in Lower Canada and the necessity of supporting himself. They were not easy years, but O'Callaghan would eventually reap some reward from them.

This chapter will trace O'Callaghan's first months in the United States, after his escape from Canada. The focus of the chapter, however, will not be O'Callaghan's American career, but rather his continuing interest in Canadian affairs, both past and present, and his relations with other exiles from the Canadas, especially Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie, who both responded quite differently to exile than did the doctor. While Mackenzie threw himself into planning an

¹ E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 17 February 1838, Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

invasion of the Canadas, and Papineau apparently rejected any such conspiracies, O'Callaghan seemed at first enthusiastic, but soon lost confidence in the prospects of success.

Once south of the border, O'Callaghan and the other Canadian exiles initially found a good deal of support for their cause in the northeastern United States. They began to believe they had suffered but a temporary reverse. Both O'Callaghan and Papineau settled temporarily at Albany and were at first shy of being recognized, only venturing out at night.² However, O'Callaghan travelled to New York for a meeting held in support of the cause of Canadian liberty on 27 December. The meeting was attended by the governor and, according to O'Callaghan's account, was "packed and crowded to suffocation."³ The doctor, summoned from the audience, addressed the assembled throng, while 500 people stood outside, unable to gain entry. He wrote the next day: "I can give you no idea of the reception I experienced. There I stood looking on the crowd of joyful & excited faces whilst the room rung with cheers, hurras, and all sorts of congratulatory noise. I never believed I could cut so important a figure!"⁴ But all was not well. Opponents of the Canadian cause, whether British sympathizers or isolationists, handed out leaflets outside the meeting, and O'Callaghan feared that the patriotes would have difficulty in raising funds. He reported that few "monied men" had attended the meeting: "The mass of the people here, I doubt not, is with us,...but certain it is at present that the rich

² Rumilly, Papineau, 1: 542.

³ O'Callaghan to an American of Albany, 28 December 1837, Papineau Papers, PAC MG24-B2, 2: 2392-95. See also Rumilly, 1: 573.

⁴ Ibid.

classes are not with us. Few of them wish to appear in public in our behalf."⁵

Soon after, O'Callaghan met L.-H. LaFontaine who was travelling to England, but hedged when the latter asked him where Papineau was. The French Canadian opined "that there was no settled plan of resistance--that the Government drove the people to resist, and thereby was the aggressor: that had no troops been sent to the country, everything would still be tranquil. This opinion accorded with my own, and I therefore assured him such was the fact," O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau.⁶ LaFontaine reported as well that "Gosford's friends state that it was never the intention of Govt. to issue Warrants except against Papineau & O'Callaghan--that these were to be arrested and liberated on bail." O'Callaghan believed this was completely false.⁷

The new year saw O'Callaghan deeply involved in efforts to reverse the military verdict of 1837. He travelled to Philadelphia with Robert Nelson in an effort to purchase guns, but was plagued by a lack of resources.⁸ He was discouraged by the failure of rich Americans to

⁵ Ibid. One correspondent reported to him that support for the patriotes in the United States was confined to the north, since the south was anxious to remain on friendly terms with England, and added: "There is great restlessness amongst the people of the province and something should be done immediately. The people have become impatient and there is no time to lose." T.S. Brown (?) to O'Callaghan, 27 January 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2606-7.

⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau (?), 30 December 1837, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2429-33.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ O'Callaghan to James Porter (?), 15 January 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2253; Amédée Papineau, p. 71.

offer much support, especially as he was convinced that action must be taken soon:

I fear very much that if we do not act immediately, or at least with as little delay as possible, the public will become fatigued with us, and our Country & our own reputations suffer in consequence. It is at the same time my opinion that if we were once in our country actively employed, much assistance could be derived from this country.⁹

He wished that Papineau would involve himself in the effort for "his great talents would enable him to mature some plan by which funds could be raised to extricate from the embarrassment [sic] which now meets us on the threshold and paralyses all our energies."¹⁰ O'Callaghan believed that the exiles must keep in the public eye or they would sink "into dishonorable obscurity."¹¹ But his confidence was beginning to wear thin. When Robert Nelson met with the doctor and Papineau to plan future action, O'Callaghan was apparently convinced that all was lost, as did his old leader.¹² And at about the same time T.S. Brown found him to be "dispirited."¹³ With the patriote Achilles sulking in his tent, the Canadian Troy was not about to fall. And O'Callaghan could do little but accept the inevitable. He may not have wanted a rebellion in

⁹ Ibid., p. 2254-55.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 2255.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Dr. Côté to Ludger Duvernay, 26 January 1838, cited by Rumilly, 1: 584; Amédée Papineau, p. 73. T.S. Brown at this time wanted a government-in-exile to be formed and a declaration of independence proclaimed: T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 26 January 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

¹³ T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 5 February 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

1837, but by early 1838 he certainly did want an invasion. He was beginning, however, to doubt that it could be done without Papineau's active support--and this was clearly not forthcoming.

O'Callaghan was not alone in feeling frustration at Papineau's stance. William Lyon Mackenzie blamed Papineau for failing in recent efforts to renew the struggle, and accused him of throwing "every possible difficulty in the way."¹⁴ Yet O'Callaghan loyally and vociferously defended his old leader in a letter to Mackenzie, stressing that his charges were false and that Papineau had done nothing to hinder the plans for future action.¹⁵ But it is clear, despite O'Callaghan's disclaimers, that Papineau was not anxious to sponsor any activities along the border. And the effect was catastrophic: without strong leadership the Lower Canadian exiles were soon squabbling more than planning. Not only were many of the more radical angry at Papineau and his allies, but Robert Nelson thought T.S. Brown "mad" and "trumpeting all and more than he knows" which he believed appropriate for Daniel O'Connell, or as he put it, "for that Jackass the 'Big beggar of Ireland' but is unsuited for us."¹⁶ One imagines that he had felt similarly about the lack of

¹⁴ E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 17 February 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

¹⁵ Ibid. O'Callaghan warned Mackenzie that what he wrote was confidential, and that "I do not wish it to go into newspapers." His injunction is understandable, since Mackenzie never hesitated to publish private correspondence without the author's permission. This, one can imagine, did not recommend him as a confidential correspondent. See Kilbourn, p. 217.

¹⁶ R. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516. The evident lack of respect for Daniel O'Connell seems to have been rare among patriotes, and one imagines that O'Callaghan would have been appalled. But there is no doubt that, if revolution is the object, wide publicity is rarely advisable.

secrecy surrounding the previous year's events in Lower Canada, and would also have rejected O'Callaghan's desire for some publicity.¹⁷

But Nelson was still in communication with the doctor. When he arrived in Burlington, he wrote to O'Callaghan that the people in Lower Canada were "growing impatient under so much delay" and that it was important that some distinguished American army officers be engaged immediately to aid their enterprise. The exiles were willing to promise the American officers ten to twenty thousand acres of partly improved land. He desired O'Callaghan to try to obtain arms for the rebels in Albany, and wrote: "If Mr. P. has not yet started to "come on" to Plattsburgh as he promised me, let him accompany you to Springfield. After that expedition let him without delay come to Plattsburgh."¹⁸ And he requested that O'Callaghan try to convince Papineau to abandon the "incognito system" which was of no use to him and "is most injurious

¹⁷ Henry Chapman, former editor of the reform Daily Advertiser in Montreal who had returned to England in 1836, wrote to O'Callaghan at this time: "A well conducted rising in many places at once would...have been certain of success indeed from the courage and determination displayed at St. Denis--I cannot help thinking that a declaration of Independence signed by the leading men would have been answered by a general rising....Now every thing depends on Upper Canada": Chapman to O'Callaghan, 28 January 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2609-12. T.S. Brown had his own ideas about the failure, attributing it largely to a lack of arms: he believed that 200 muskets at St. Charles would have secured the patriotes control of the south of the St. Lawrence. But he noted also that while the common people turned out in large numbers, the "Leaders had not shown corresponding energy.": T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 26 January 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. And earlier he had written: "So far as I was concerned want of Muskets was the only trouble....On the Richelieu we had nothing but fowling pieces without Bayonets and these mostly old and out of order. It was murder to ask men to use them against a well provided enemy.": Brown to Mackenzie, 13 January 1838, *ibid.*

¹⁸ Robert Nelson to O'Callaghan, 23 January (?) 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2576-77.

to our operations as you well know."¹⁹ For Papineau was not only in exile, but in hiding! Using various aliases and concealing his whereabouts from all but his closest associates, the great man certainly seems to have lost his nerve. While some of the other exiles, including O'Callaghan, took precautions as well, including the use of aliases, none was as secretive and apprehensive as Papineau.²⁰

In late February O'Callaghan was able to report to Papineau that the rebels in the Plattsburgh area were armed with 600-700 muskets and were intending "to borrow about 2000 stands from a store in the vicinity," as well as about a dozen cannon. They were receiving reinforcements daily from Canada, and were confident that 400-500 American volunteers would join them when needed. Mackenzie had conferred with Nelson and it had been decided that his force, stationed around Watertown, should attack Kingston on or about the twenty-second. It was expected that, once news of the "sack" of Kingston arrived at Montreal, troops would be despatched westward. At this crucial point the Plattsburgh rebels would advance on Montreal. O'Callaghan had recovered some of his optimism: "everything depends on the attack on Kingston....The Reformers are in great spirits. They are daily receiving the most encouraging assurances from the province."²¹ In

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Robert Nelson also believed in precautions: on 21 February 1838, he wrote two letters to Mackenzie, the first announcing his intention of abandoning plans to invade Canada for "this year," the second informing Mackenzie that the first was "to deceive our enemies." W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

²¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 25 February 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2684-86.

fact the doctor was even able to give details of the proposed constitution of the new republic. All, including Indians, were to have equal rights, freedom of opinion and religion, and the "Liberty of the Press."

Both English and French were to have legal status, and the seigneurial regime was to be abolished, as well as dowries, imprisonment for debt, and capital punishment except for murder. There would be universal suffrage, vote by ballot, trial by jury and "General Education ...provided by the Government." And the Crown, Clergy and Land Company's reserves would become property of the republic, except for those already conceded.²² This very liberal constitution, of which the chartists and revolutionaries of 1848 would undoubtedly have approved, was obviously based on a strong belief in egalitarian democracy. While O'Callaghan undoubtedly approved of the general lines of this proposal, Papineau must have been appalled. He certainly would have feared the evident radicalization of the patriote movement among the exiles. But O'Callaghan was also very concerned at the time by the rebels' finances, expressing the hope that 20,000 livres recently taken from the Fabrique of the Parish of Châteauguay had found its way "into the right persons' hands."²³

By the beginning of March, however, O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau that the proposed attack on Kingston had failed to materialize. But these dashed hopes had not disheartened the rebel forces at Plattsburgh. O'Callaghan, though, was again becoming doubtful of the results: "All these accounts, however, force us to look with anxiety to the north. I

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

fear much that matters are too desperate now to be remedied, and that all these attempts will terminate in increased misery for those who are in Canada, and perpetual banishment for those who are in exile."²⁴ More and more the doctor was becoming discouraged, and his function was becoming that of the spectator, chronicler and analyst, rather than the participant. Without Papineau to lead them, the patriotes were disunited and uncertain. And O'Callaghan seemed like a man who could still think, but could not act. He was, after all, an ideologue, not a general.

But O'Callaghan could still easily be roused to optimism. He informed Papineau on 3 March of the invasion of Canada by Robert Nelson with great enthusiasm, noting the degree of support which he was reputed to have in the state. Only four days later, though, he wrote dejectedly that the hopes which they had indulged for the past four months were crushed: Nelson's invasion had been a dismal failure after most of his American supporters had deserted. His remaining forces had fled back across the border when confronted by the Missisquoi volunteers! They had never even faced British regulars. O'Callaghan concluded sadly: "Thus has terminated this illstarred expedition. The result has clearly proved that you were right in the calculations you had made of the small degree of confidence which is to be placed in these American Volunteers, and justifies the caution & prudence with which you discountenanced and

²⁴ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 1 March 1838, *ibid.*, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2701-2.

disapproved of this expedition."²⁵

O'Callaghan was finding it difficult to settle down in the United States. He moved from Albany to Saratoga Springs in early March, and there was the guest of Chancellor Walworth, a prominent lawyer.²⁶ Mackenzie visited him to discuss strategy, and stated that he had not abandoned "the idea of a revolutionary Upper Canada," but had decided to concentrate upon securing the services of an experienced military officer, rather than "crowds of adventurers."²⁷ He also expressed to O'Callaghan the constancy of his confidence in Papineau, and dismissed

²⁵ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 7 March 1838, *ibid.*, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2739. Lieutenant General Sir J. Colborne reported in a despatch to Lord Glenelg of 3 March 1838: "I have the honour to acquaint you, that parties of rebels from Lower Canada which for several weeks had been at Platzburg [sic] and Champlain, arming and preparing to enter the province, crossed Lake Champlain on the night of the 27th ultimo, and entered this province from Alburg in Vermont on the 28th. They did not, however move more than a mile beyond the frontier. The Missisquoi volunteers quickly assembled to attack them, and Lieutenant Colonel Booth advanced from St. John, with the 43d Regiment to Henryville early on the 1st, with the intention of intercepting them on their march; but they repassed the line the same day, and surrendered their arms to General Wool, of the United States Army. I transmit to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a letter from that officer, by which it appears, that he has arrested Coté and Doctor Robert Nelson, the leaders of the rebel force, and disarmed their followers. It appears that the rebels had with them about 1,500 stand of arms, three field pieces, and a large quantity of ammunition. General Wool, I believe, has used every exertion to prevent the organization of the rebels, and to seize the arms with which they have been supplied by the Americans." *Sessional Papers, 1837-38*, p. 509. Amédée Papineau, p. 88, records the author's entry of 4 March: "Le Dr. est au désespoir, il n'espère plus rien."

²⁶ James J. Walsh, "Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan," *Studies*, 22 (September 1933): 471. See also O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 3 and 7 March 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2701-2703, 2721-22; and John Tracey to Mackenzie, 3 July 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

²⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 7 March 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2740.

the allegations of his detractors as due "to sourness of temper."²⁸

As for the doctor himself, he intended to remain in Saratoga Springs "until the opening of the navigation when, if we are condemned, as I expect, to perpetual exile, I propose trying my fortune in New York. Perhaps I may get something to do there in translating french works into English."²⁹ True to his word, he moved to New York in early April.³⁰ Unlike some of his fellow exiles, the Irishman retained a firm grip upon his grasp of reality--and of the need to support himself.

Papineau had meanwhile moved to Philadelphia and O'Callaghan wrote to advise him that no reliance could be placed on speeches in the British Parliament to achieve liberty for Canada--this must be accomplished by the people themselves. Ironically, he recommended that the French-Canadian leader go to Washington in an attempt to secure American assistance, and stressed the need for a pro-patriote newspaper to be published in the United States. By means of the latter "we could preach up a Crusade."³¹ The next day he wrote his old friend: "As a Political Economist I am opposed to Colonies; as a Philanthropist I am still more so and my efforts have always kept in view that sort of Government which would enable Canada to slip quietly into a state of Independance [sic]. Independance [sic] I know must come, but I would rather have it by means

²⁸ Ibid., p. 2743.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ His moving about is evident from the datelines of his letters in the Papineau Papers at the PAC and those in the Mackenzie-Lindsey papers at the AO.

³¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 13 March 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2768-72.

of Radical Reform than of bloody Revolution."³² O'Callaghan however, was becoming annoyed at Papineau for not writing to him: "I'm sure you ought to write to me if it were only to say 'thank you' for all the long letters I manufacture for you out of Newspapers & c."³³ He added that, from a perusal of Gosford's despatches recently published, it was clear that:

The destruction of the Canadian Constitution is thus shown to be the work, not of 'the Rebels,' but another link in that general chain of conspiracy against their rights & political existence which the people of Canada have been contending against ever since the year 1759. Those who would lay the sin at the door of the Patriots are thus contradicted by the author himself of all the misfortune from which Canada and her children are now suffering.³⁴

The doctor also detailed Perrault's view that the Canadians favoured an amnesty and that consequently "il ne nous reste donc plusqu'à nous soumettre."³⁵

Papineau replied to O'Callaghan later in March, apologizing profusely for his neglect:

Rien ne peut ni m'intéresser plus, ni me consoler mieux, que la continuation de votre correspondance quand je suis privé du plaisir de votre société. Vous avez raison de me gronder, sur ma négligence à répondre plus vite, à un correspondant aussi diligent, et à un aussi bon ami.³⁶

³² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 14 March 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2779.

³³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 20 March 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2803.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2799.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2802.

³⁶ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 26 March 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2830.

The doctor must have been mollified, but the feelings of a man exiled from home and looking to an uncertain future are easily bruised. Yet the two patriotes remained close, and O'Callaghan was glad that Papineau was enjoying diversion and good company as, "powerless as we now are for good to our country, perhaps the wiser and more philosophic plan is to recruit our strength, by relieving our minds from gloomy thoughts, so as to be prepared to do our duty with renewed vigour should an opportunity be again afforded us to defend our Country or to advocate its rights."³⁷

In February the British Parliament had suspended the Lower Canadian constitution. This had been done largely at the behest of the British minority in Lower Canada which had complained of the anti-commercial and unprogressive spirit of the majority in the Lower Canadian Assembly.³⁸ At the same time Lord Durham was being sent out to investigate and propose a solution for the troubles of Canada. O'Callaghan was infuriated by the course of events:

I have, in common with you, but very feeble hopes that our Dictator will do justice to Canada... I [am] convinced that the old Colonial policy is to be continued. The abolition of the House of Assembly is... a removal of one of the principal obstacles which they supposed opposed their wishes. Durham sets out by professing that he will know no party, neither British nor Canadian... yet he does not hesitate to declare, incorrectly as ever [sic] person knows who is at all conversant with Canadian politics, that it is not the British Parliament, nor the Ministry, but the rebels that have caused the

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Lord Glenelg to Lord Durham, 20 January 1838, The Durham Papers, p. 23.

suspension of the Canadian Constitution. Why Gosford recommended that suspension last September, immediately after the prorogation, by proclamation, of the parliament. There were no rebels then, except indeed Rebellion consists in holding meetings and passing resolutions. This declaration of my Lord Durham induces me to anticipate that he will come out prejudiced against the late majority of the Assembly, and that he will in due course fall, like all his predecessors, into the hands of the enemies of the Country.³⁹

It is interesting that, despite his conviction that the British Colonial Office was intent upon conniving at the continued subserviency of Canada, O'Callaghan still appears to have been surprised that Durham would follow the same general line of policy as his predecessors. Perhaps this is understandable considering Durham's reputation as "Radical Jack." Yet there was a certain quality of naïveté to the editor of the Vindicator which had proved so costly to him and to his cause only months earlier, but this was one new trick which the old Irish hound could never learn: he became more cautious, less optimistic, more sceptical and suspicious, but he could never master the true cynicism of the political manipulator or the imperial administrator. This was probably inevitable, but it certainly had been unfortunate for the sake of the cause he so cherished.

By the middle of April O'Callaghan was in New York and wrote his former leader that Mackenzie had been arrested by the American authori-

³⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 4 April 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2847-51. O'Callaghan seems correct in his suspicions of Durham, for Leonard Cooper, Radical Jack: The Life of John George Lambton, First Earl of Durham (London: Cresset Press, 1959), p. 237, comments: "It is clear that before arriving in Canada he had made up his mind about the main principles which must guide him. He believed that the difference between the two nationalities lay at the root of every trouble, and he hoped to remove it by reverting to a single and united Canada."

ties there for his subversive activities.⁴⁰ He was becoming ever more convinced of the futility of present attempts to disrupt the Canadas, and he wrote "to Perrault urging on him particularly to put a stop to the mad expedition against Lower Canada which some Americans on the borders of Vermont are getting up."⁴¹ With the constitution suspended, a Special Council had been appointed to rule Lower Canada which had eleven Canadian members and eleven of some other ethnic origin.⁴² A number of English businessmen, in a strong political position, had presented an address to Lord Glenelg complaining of the neglect of their interests, the continuance in force of antiquated French laws including the seigneurial system, the burdens placed on land conveyance and security of investment, and their lack of influence in the Assembly. They contended that no communion of interests with the French Canadians was possible, and demanded a union of the Canadas, the gradual introduction of the English language in all legislative and judicial proceedings, and the redistribution of constituencies so as to assure them of proper representation.⁴³ At the same time the Catholic clergy, which had earlier

⁴⁰ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 11 April 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2860-62. At the same time he sent him "a curiosity--a 'Treasury Note' of the Provisional Government of Upper Canada for two dollars".

⁴¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 April 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2888. And at the end of the month he wrote to Papineau about the plan of some Americans to launch a raid into Upper Canada, and reported to him that the patriot Dr. Dumouchelle was in hiding at Rigaud among the Irish settlers! This news must have warmed his heart: O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 29 April 1838, *ibid.*, pp. 2901-2.

⁴² See O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 22 April 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2890; and Jacques Monet, The Last Cannon Shot (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1969; reprint ed., 1976), pp. 18-19.

⁴³ Glenelg to the Earl of Durham, 19 April 1838, The Durham Papers, p. 26.

petitioned the Queen to respect the rights of French Canadians in the province, now came out in opposition to any project of union, which they feared would be an attempt by the English to gain predominance.⁴⁴ Many of them were also trying to alleviate the suffering of the political prisoners held in the province.⁴⁵

The British authorities, however, were evidently confident of future prospects. The cost of maintaining military forces in the province to suppress unrest since the beginning of the year had, by mid-April, amounted to £450,000.⁴⁶ With the failure of Nelson's invasion and Mackenzie's arrest, it was decided that the militia and volunteer forces could be demobilized.⁴⁷ Although raids and tensions along the border continued, Glenelg advised Durham late in April that the American government was doing its best to suppress the trouble, and that he should therefore do nothing to offend the United States.⁴⁸ Soon after Colborne was able to inform Glenelg that the "tranquil state of the province" had allowed him to revoke martial law in the district of

⁴⁴ Petitions of all the clergy to the Queen, "Dossier sur les troubles de 1837-38," Archives of the Diocese of Montreal, 901-106, 1837-1 and 5 (hereafter "Dossier"); and Lartigue to Gosford, 23 December 1837, RAPQ (1944-1945), p. 264; and Lartigue to de Sidyme, 23 December 1837, ibid. Of those who signed the petition, eleven were Irish and 106 French, as well as Father Vincent Quiblier who signed for the thirty-four members of the Sulpician order in the province: "Dossier," 1837-4. See also Bourget to Signay, n.d., in RAPQ (1945), p. 218.

⁴⁵ James Cuthbert to Bourget, 21 November 1838, "Dossier," 1837-38.

⁴⁶ Glenelg to Durham, 20 April 1838: Enclosure, Spearman to Stephen, The Durham Papers, p. 27.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Glenelg to Durham, 21 April 1838, ibid., pp. 28-29.

Montreal.⁴⁹ The authorities and their allies among the commercial establishment were moving at the same time to settle the affairs of Canada along lines more to their liking now that the inconvenience of democracy had been removed. Far away in New York O'Callaghan watched grimly as their plans unfolded.⁵⁰

By May squabbles were once again arising among the exiles in the United States. Recriminations were hurled back and forth, and charges of treachery began to appear.⁵¹ Yet O'Callaghan was beginning to work more closely with Mackenzie. As early as January T.S. Brown had tried to get O'Callaghan to establish a newspaper in the United States devoted to the Canadian cause.⁵² The doctor was interested, agreeing that a paper was needed "to advocate the rights of the mass of the People of

⁴⁹ Colborne to Glenelg, 27 April 1838, Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 39: 532.

⁵⁰ Almost all of O'Callaghan's letters during these months contain references to the latest moves made by the government. See, for example, O'Callaghan's letters to L.-J. Papineau of 3, 5, 10, and 14 May, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2908, 2911, 2925, 2942.

⁵¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 May 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2927. O'Callaghan and Mackenzie had become suspicious that Marshall Spring Bidwell was a government spy, and he in turn accused the doctor in a letter to Sir Francis Bond Head of giving a "garbled" extract of one of his (Bidwell's) letters. O'Callaghan commented: "I am sorry Mr. B. has made this assertion, for it is not true. The extract was a faithful and true extract, and as for the letter itself it could not be considered a private one since it treated purely of political subjects on which he gave an opinion which if he were sincere, he would not object to be made known. As it is, I am in a most unfavorable position. Previous to my leaving Montreal I destroyed all the letters which I had ever received from Mr. B. fearing that, were my lodging searched, I should have exposed Mr. B. to some trouble were letters from him found in my possession. Thus I have deprived myself of all evidence by which I could show how unfounded is the accusation today brought against me. However, I suppose this is one of the many other bitter things which are to be borne in our present situation."

⁵² T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 26 January and 12 February 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

both Canadas." Unfortunately he could not afford to purchase "the material of an office."⁵³ When his hopes to take over the direction of an "already established" paper at Rochester did not materialize, he became an enthusiastic supporter of Mackenzie's Gazette.⁵⁴ That paper began publication at New York in May of 1838.⁵⁵ For the second edition he wrote an account of the battle of St. Eustache, highlighting the "atrocities committed by the British troops," compiled from despatches, newspapers, and articles in L'Ami du Peuple by the Curé Paquin.⁵⁶ And in the issue of 26 May, an article signed "London Spectator" seems to bear O'Callaghan's imprint. It stressed that a letter of Dr. Wolfred Nelson found at his house in St. Denis indicated that he "contemplated 'passive resistance', not active insurrection." The author went on to advocate that "our plan of non-consumption and agitation" be pursued for it would "render the expenses of the colony more burdensome to England by the necessity of an increased military force, and the diminution of

⁵³ E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 17 February 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. He added: "I have long since thought a press in this Country devoted to the Canadian Cause to be a sine qua non not only for the understanding by the People of these States, of our difficulties, and wretched political condition, but as necessary for the defense of our own characters & reputations as public men. All I wanted was the means."

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Stephen Kenny, "The Canadian Expatriate Press in the United States, 1838-1841" (a paper presented to the CHA at the annual conference of the Learned Societies, May 1985), p. 3. Mackenzie's Gazette was published weekly at New York from 12 May 1838 until 26 January 1839. Mackenzie then moved the paper to Rochester, where it was published weekly from 3 March 1839 until May 1840. After that it was published fortnightly until 21 November 1840 (but not at all between 1 June and 17 September).

⁵⁶ Mackenzie's Gazette, 19 May 1838. See also O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 19 May 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2951.

her commerce."⁵⁷

Mackenzie's paper was clearly preoccupying O'Callaghan. He wrote to Papineau in mid-May: "I hope that the paper is, altogether, such as may be useful to poor Canada. I and a boy are the only persons McK. have [sic] to help him. We staid [sic] up all night last night, in order to get the papers ready for distribution. He sells a great many odd numbers independent of those subscribed for."⁵⁸ And shortly after he commented that the Gazette was "fast gaining in circulation" but short of money, a situation which was aggravated by the fact that Mackenzie had to pay cash for everything, as his credit was badly damaged when he was arrested by a "Type founder" at the suggestion of Sir Francis Bond Head. And donations were hard to come by, for "the mercantile classes here are for the greatest part, strongly opposed to us."⁵⁹ This was not surprising, as good diplomatic and trade relations with Great Britain were dear to the hearts of many eastern business interests while a democratic revolution in the Canadas was not!

O'Callaghan's contributions to Mackenzie's Gazette continued to be quite regular during its first months of publication, although it is impossible to identify them all since they were not signed. And the doctor was pursuing a policy of disinformation as to his whereabouts--sending letters to Mackenzie datelined "London" and "Montreal" during

⁵⁷ Mackenzie's Gazette, 26 May 1838.

⁵⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 19 May 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2951.

⁵⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 27 May 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2966.

the summer of 1838,⁶⁰ and submitting articles to his newspaper which were apparently written from Canadian points.⁶¹ A series of articles entitled "History of the 20 Years War against the Liberal Press in Lower Canada" was definitely the work of O'Callaghan.⁶² In it he concluded that freedom of speech was now dead in Lower Canada, and that liberals and French Canadians, "the subjects, in their character and principles, of every sort of defamation and calumny on the part of their political enemies," were unable to defend themselves.

In September Mackenzie accused Henry Chapman, who had long worked with the reformers in Lower Canada, of selling out by accepting a government post in England.⁶³ O'Callaghan defended his friend, and his contributions to the paper appear to have fallen off after this.⁶⁴ Certainly they seem to have ceased entirely when Mackenzie moved his paper from New York to Rochester at the end of January.⁶⁵ One of his last contributions, and the only one he signed, was a poem which

⁶⁰ O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 29 June, 19, 24 and 31 July 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516 are datelined London; O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 28 July, 5 and 7 September, *ibid.*, are datelined Montreal.

⁶¹ O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 9 September 1838, *ibid.*

⁶² Mackenzie's Gazette, 25 August, 8 and 15 September 1838. See O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 14 August 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 22 September 1838.

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 26 September 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶⁵ Mackenzie's Gazette, 26 January and 23 February 1839.

indicated his disappointment at Durham's repressive policy in Lower Canada, for he had expected more from the English radical:

Corruption was thy lever - to debase,
Not elevate the masses was thine aim -
And with vile gold thou boughtest viler praise,
And from false sycophants a bastard fame.⁶⁶

Playing the part of "the petty Autocrat," O'Callaghan wrote, Durham had proved himself a fraudulent liberal and "a cheat."⁶⁷

O'Callaghan had earlier suggested to Papineau that he consider making out notes which would serve as a basis for his biography. The doctor believed this was important "not only to your own reputation but to your Country & to the Cause of Democracy in Canada" because so far all those who had written on the subject were enemies of Papineau and the patriotes.⁶⁸ Papineau may well have complied, because O'Callaghan produced "A Biographical Sketch of the Hon. Louis Joseph Papineau" which appeared in a May issue of Mackenzie's Gazette and was also distributed

⁶⁶ "Farewell Address to the Earl of Durham," in *ibid.*, 24 November 1838.

⁶⁷ On another matter, O'Callaghan was interested in reports of the death of Major Warde in a duel with R. Sweeney at Montreal over some remark made by the former about the latter's wife. The good doctor concluded of the affair: "Warde was to have been interred on Friday without military honors. This appears to be a just judgment and punishment on this Major. He was a prominent man at St. Charles. Insulted the feelings of the people so far as to ride his horse into the church, and paraded around the altar singing, I am told, indecent songs!" O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 28 May 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2969. See also O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 27 May 1838, *ibid.*, p. 2966. This incident must certainly have reminded O'Callaghan of events common to Ireland during and after the Rebellion of 1798.

⁶⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 1 March 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2703.

in pamphlet form.⁶⁹ O'Callaghan, who referred to Papineau as the "steady, unpurchased and unpurchaseable [sic] champion of democracy" who was devoted to the American principles of government "beloved by the great mass of the people of the Canadas," argued in the sketch that the British, in sending over a Royal Commission in 1835 "of which Lord Gosford was the imbecile head," had "meant merely to deceive."⁷⁰ Faced with Russell's Resolutions, Papineau "recommended the people to abstain every where from the use of taxed articles; to encourage domestic manufacture, and free trade with these states; to withdraw all confidence from the government, and those who held office under it, and finally to elect their own justices of the peace, and militia officers."⁷¹

O'Callaghan, who had obviously consulted the Sessional Papers of the British Parliament, argued that they clearly demonstrated the government's resolve by mid-October to "annihilate" the Canadian constitution.⁷² The patriotes, on the other hand, remained determined upon strictly constitutional opposition. However,

All this strict observance of the very forms of the constitution, could not protect Mr. Papineau and the other gentlemen who acted with him, in defence of popular rights. They "must be put down," said Lord Gosford, and down they were put accordingly, despite of all law. So true is it, that "the very forms of the constitution," however respected they

⁶⁹ E.B. O'Callaghan, "A Biographical Sketch of the Hon. Louis Joseph Papineau" (Saratoga Springs: Sentinel Office, 1838). It is available at the Rare Book Room, McLennan Library, McGill University. It was also published in Mackenzie's Gazette, 19 May 1838. Neither version acknowledged the author.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 3-5.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁷² Ibid.

may be by the people, are but little regarded by those possessed of irresponsible power, when they are determined on violence, persecution and wrong.⁷³

Thus the government had won, had destroyed "all popular rights" and driven "the advocates of democracy into prison or exile." But, O'Callaghan insisted, "democracy, like christianity, only prospers the more, the more its followers are persecuted," and "peace will never return to the province, nor will the Canadians ever be satisfied, until they obtain elective institutions like those of the United States."⁷⁴

Much of the pamphlet was evidently aimed at an American audience, but parts of it were surely intended for the eyes of the exile community as well. O'Callaghan defended Papineau against the charges now being made against him. He was accused of greed--yet he had refused to accept his salary as Speaker of the Assembly of \$4,000 a year since 1832--thus forfeiting \$20,000. He was charged with being an enemy of trade, but he was really opposed only to "monopoly" and to restrictive laws which promoted "commercial robbery."

Mr. Papineau, in short, takes enlarged and liberal views of commercial legislation, and cannot adapt his ideas to the pinched and narrow notions of a few colonial traders, who are, for the most part, the most ignorant and selfish class of persons in her majesty's dominions.⁷⁵

Finally, he was accused of cowardice, yet he had often shown great phys-

⁷³ Ibid., p. 6.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

ical and moral fortitude, even when told by Gosford in 1836 that he faced possible assassination by ultra-Tories if the Assembly did not vote supply.⁷⁶ But Papineau, it was said, failed to stand by his supporters:

What is wanted, is that Mr. Papineau should be seen in arms. To drive him to this, has been the evident object of the colonial government. First, his friends were arrested; next, it was whispered abroad that a warrant was out against him. Did the executive want possession of his person? Evidently not, or he would have been the first seized. What they wanted was to drive him into open rebellion. In this they have not succeeded. He withdrew from the town, and the official faction is now infuriated because he has not been found in open rebellion. They now taunt him with cowardice, in the hope that he will be goaded on to what they desire--herein they merely underestimate his moral courage.

Papineau could scarcely have had a more steadfast defender. But the future as well as the past would determine whether he merited it, and whether O'Callaghan would remain as loyal.

Papineau was continuing to avoid, as far as possible, conspiratorial entanglements. Thus, when his wife Julie arrived in Saratoga from Canada, he was off in the wilds of Pennsylvania with a geological expedition. O'Callaghan dutifully promised "to go regularly to the Philadelphia boat on her arrival here [Albany] in order to meet

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 7-8. O'Callaghan writes that Papineau was told that he "and another member of the assembly who was obnoxious to the Tory party" were the objects of an assassination plot. O'Callaghan may well have been the other member, considering the Tory attitude towards him.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

him on his arrival.⁷⁸ Once Papineau arrived, he, his wife and some of their children visited New York City in company with O'Callaghan. They paid a visit to Mackenzie's office, where they met Robert Nelson. He talked coldly to Papineau, and refused to shake O'Callaghan's hand.⁷⁹

The exile is often isolated, and may feel very lonely. He may also suffer from a lack of news from his former home, and this was far more true in an age devoid of radio, telegraph, telephone and television. O'Callaghan related to Madame Papineau a story relevant to this theme:

Some time after we had arrived at Albany last Winter, some of the Tory brutes in Canada circulated the report of your death, which shocked us to a degree beyond conception, and caused us to curse, more strongly than ever the misfortune of being the victims of British oppression. We were all alarmed lest Mr. P. should hear it, although we at the same [time] knew not how to prevent his accidentally learning it, or what to say to console him when he should learn the magnitude of his misery. Thank God, the news was untrue, and...I am happy to know that there is every chance of your living still long enough to see your country happy and, I hope, independent [sic].⁸⁰

It could also be difficult for the exile to communicate with the people from whom he was geographically separated--although a man of Papineau's stature had innumerable means of overcoming this geographical fact, and an audience eager for any utterance. In fact, one correspondent even

⁷⁸ O'Callaghan to Madame Papineau, 5 June 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2979-80.

⁷⁹ Amédée Papineau, p. 148; Rumilly, 2: 27.

⁸⁰ O'Callaghan to Madame Papineau, 5 June 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 2979-80.

suggested that he "publish a manifesto in defense of Canada. I might almost say, Europe expects it from him."⁸¹ O'Callaghan had fewer opportunities, and thus undoubtedly appreciated Mackenzie's newspaper.⁸²

Events in Canada and the fate of the political prisoners there, as well as his own plans and those of the other refugees, kept O'Callaghan occupied during the summer months of 1838.⁸³ It was, nonetheless, a period of relative calm, belying the coming of yet another violent storm within Lower Canada. But the Irishman was by this time becoming reconciled to his situation, and was no longer the firebrand of former days. Robert Nelson even blamed him for convincing Papineau to remain aloof from his schemes.⁸⁴ This was clearly unfair, as

⁸¹ Thomas Falconer to O'Callaghan, an extract of which is included in a letter from O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 June 1838, *ibid.*, pp. 3025-27.

⁸² But the circumstances of exile could make even writing hazardous: at least one "patriot" had commented to T.S. Brown that considering the need for secrecy, "you and Mackenzie and O'Callaghan are too fond of writing." T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 5 June 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MG 516.

⁸³ See for example, O'Callaghan to Papineau, 26 June 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3046-49. A fund for the Canadians exiled to Bermuda at this time raised £132. The donors included forty-five French Canadians, two English/Scots, two Irish (Peter Dunn and P. Brennan) and two others (John Donegan and Jacob De Witt); List of subscribers to a fund for the Canadians exiled to Bermuda, Montreal Prison, 2 July 1838, Wolfred Nelson Papers, PAC, MG24-B34, 1: 1-3.

⁸⁴ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 October 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3161. T.S. Brown and Robert Nelson were both furious at Papineau by this time because of his lethargy. Nelson wrote to Mackenzie: "It is remarkable fact that the whole unlettered part of Lower Canada is courageous, determined not to lose an opportunity to expel the British authority, while the Catholic--college-educated...are with the Veiled Prophet at their head, disposed to accept any arrangement for their return that will not expose their cowardly skin." He added, moreover, that most patriote sympathizers "do not thank you for your devotion to the Only Star." R. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, 21 July 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. See also T.S. Brown to Mackenzie, 5 June 1838, *ibid.*

O'Callaghan had been at first very frustrated by Papineau's reluctance to become involved in rallying support for the patriote cause in the United States. It was only after the failure of Mackenzie's and Nelson's early efforts that the doctor had begun really to reconcile himself to Papineau's stance. He came to realize that the exiles were unlikely to succeed in any invasion without large-scale American aid--for even with limited French help in 1798, the Irish rebels had been unable to accomplish anything of significance after the suppression of the original uprising. But that help was not forthcoming--and Papineau would not attempt to secure it.

Nor were the British yet willing to appease their old opponents. Durham and his advisors were working out a settlement for the Canadas which would be based on a union and the assimilation of the French Canadians. O'Callaghan was already aware by July of the educational system which was to be proposed in the fall and which wholeheartedly endorsed "Anglification."⁸⁵ He was enraged, and wrote to Mackenzie that French-Canadian children were to be compelled to learn English, that public appointees would be required to speak the language, and that even priests would be expected to preach in English at least once a month, while only those of British origin would be eligible to serve on government commissions "lest the plans for the gradual anglification... may, in any way, be interrupted or embarrassed by the prejudices of the natives."⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 53.

⁸⁶ E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 24 July 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516. Naturally the clergy was also very upset. See Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 53-55.

The government in Lower Canada had also decided to exile several leading patriotes to Bermuda, and had decreed that many of the exiles currently in the United States could not return.⁸⁷ Among the latter were Papineau, Mackenzie and O'Callaghan. Despite their common fate, however, the old comrades were constantly quarrelling and bickering. Mackenzie, already becoming disillusioned with the United States, was worried that even if a Canadian republic was established, it would soon be corrupted. O'Callaghan advised him to stop "looking at the dark side of the world perpetually."⁸⁸ But the two were still close friends, as were Papineau and O'Callaghan. Some of the exiles were, however, no longer on speaking terms. Robert Nelson could scarcely think of names insulting enough to call Papineau, but "that imitative ass," "the Great Turkey-cock" and "the cow" came readily to his mind.⁸⁹ He blamed Papineau both for his cowardice in the fall of 1837, and for his reluctance to participate in efforts to invade from the United States. As a new crisis loomed in the fall of 1838, he wrote to Mackenzie that all

⁸⁷ See E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 31 July 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516. The exile was illegal, and the prisoners were released.

⁸⁸ E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 14 August 1838, *ibid.* And in a letter of 1 October he pleaded with Mackenzie to contain his cynicism: "A man who throws so many stones ought to be perfect.": E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 1 October 1838, *ibid.*

⁸⁹ R. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, 25 August, 2 September and 6 October 1838, *ibid.* He did not think much of George Etienne Cartier either, for in his letter of 2 September he referred to him as "a little squeaking, impudent, chatterbox boy, even after grey hair shall have grown on his brainless skull."

the refugees were fully committed except "the cow and the cow bell."⁹⁰ The "cow bell" was none other than O'Callaghan, so-called undoubtedly because he so closely reflected Papineau's thinking.

The doctor was undeniably very close to his old leader. As autumn set in he suggested that Papineau and his wife "would be much more comfortable here [in Albany] just now than at Saratoga....This place is more gay, and therefore you and she will be less ennuyés than where you are."⁹¹ Soon afterwards he was pleased to hear that they had indeed moved to the state capital.⁹² As to the preparations being made on the frontier by the exiles and their sympathizers, he commented:

It is said now that the 1st of Nov. is to be "the day of revelations." But for my own part I cannot foresee any thing but confusion and defeat...They have asked me, here, to join their Society...but I have declined. I can be of no use in such a body, and I do not think it right, to become a part of such a body from mere curiosity. Whatever be their secrets, I seek not to learn them.⁹³

The doctor evidently had few illusions about the prospects of any successful action being taken along the border without significant American help, and he was discouraged by President Martin Van Buren's reluctance

⁹⁰ R. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, 6 October 1838, *ibid.* He further wrote that there were no spies in the East except Louis Perrault who was making misrepresentations to shield Papineau even to the detriment of "the whole country."

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3163. O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 October 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3163.

⁹² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 25 October 1838, *ibid.*, p. 3179.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 3180.

to aid the exiles' cause.⁹⁴

O'Callaghan was already beginning to turn towards the subject that would be his major occupation for the rest of his life--history. He wrote in the same letter: "I spend the greater part of my time here at the New York Society's library, poring over Histories of the old Colonies. The history of Canada is only a repetition of bye-gone times, I find, and will continue so to be till the fruit falls from the tree."⁹⁵

The authorities in Canada were meanwhile aware that renewed efforts by the disaffected were to be expected. In a "Secret and Confidential" communication of 9 August Durham reported to Glenelg that the situation in Lower Canada was grave. He blamed the trouble on racial antagonism, and contended that the real struggle was over the retention of French laws and customs. Thus it was the English party which supported responsible government, he claimed, while the reformers favoured the present system or an even less democratic arrangement. Since the ultimate predominance of the British race was assured, he considered the continuation of French Institutions unwise. He conceived the main aim of the English party to be the removal of obstacles to their industrial enterprises, including laws and institutions of a "French" character. They were, in fact, "as little loyal as the Canadians," but would be

⁹⁴ Ibid. Mackenzie was at this time supporting Van Buren for re-election, and O'Callaghan commented: "If Van Buren would risk in favor of the cause you have at heart, as much as you have risked for his cause, all might go well": E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 14 August 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

⁹⁵ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 25 October 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3180.

appeased if, as he thought advisable, "such measures as will effectually provide for the abstraction of all legislation on British interests from the control of a French majority" were put into effect. Nonetheless, he felt a rebellion was, in the instant, probably inevitable.⁹⁶ Durham would endorse a similarly unflattering view of French Canadians in his Report: "I know of no national distinctions marking and continuing a more hopeless inferiority....It is to elevate them from that inferiority that I desire to give to the Canadians our English character."⁹⁷ But his administration was being vigorously attacked in the British Parliament because of his illegal deportation of some patriotes to Bermuda. By September he had determined to resign, a decision accepted by the home government on 12 November 1838.⁹⁸ It was a consummation devoutly to be wished. With gunfire again about to replace verbiage, General Colborne was once more thrust into the position of temporary administrator, which he had previously held after Gosford's departure.

O'Callaghan was well aware of the impending outbreak in the north. According to Duvernay, the uprising was to begin in Canada, and the exiles and sympathizers in the United States were "to flock in" only after the trouble had begun. The rising had been postponed from 1 November, but arms and ammunition had been sent into Canada in great

⁹⁶ Durham to Glenelg, 9 August 1838, The Durham Papers, pp. 64-65.

⁹⁷ John George Earl of Durham, Report on the Affairs of British North America, ed. C.P. Lucas, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), 2: 292.

⁹⁸ Durham to Glenelg, 28 September 1838, and Glenelg to Durham, 12 November 1838, Correspondence between Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Earl of Durham, on the Subject of the Latter's Resignation (Toronto: n.p., 1839), pp. 22-38, 44-47.

quantities.⁹⁹ As for the former editor of the Vindicator, he was somewhat preoccupied by his own circumstances:

I have not succeeded here in getting employed, so I have determined to practice my profession. You will see my address in Mac's Gazette. I hate to be here without some ostensible employment--so I have taken some rooms and thrown myself on the waters, whether to sink or swim is for time to determine. I shall, however, be always ready, when you give the signal, to do my part in behalf of Canadian Freedom, either here or on the Frontier, or in the Province, according as you may desire.¹⁰⁰

He would try mightily to establish himself as a medical doctor--a sure sign that he had given up any great hopes of an imminent return to Canada, and had decided to limit his involvement in the exile movement.¹⁰¹

Yet O'Callaghan continued to be deeply concerned by the plans for an outbreak which would begin in the western part of Upper Canada and spread along the St. Lawrence River: "The realization of such expectations is, you will clearly perceive, another matter altogether, depending on the extent of the arrangements within--the state of

⁹⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 3 November 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3208.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 3211.

¹⁰¹ He placed an advertisement in Mackenzie's Gazette on 1 December 1838, stating his address as 185 Mott Street, between Broome and Spring Streets. This seems clearly an address in Albany or Saratoga Springs. On 23 March 1839 he placed another advertisement, describing himself as the "Successor to the Late Dr. Vanderhood" and giving his address as 130 Seventeenth Street, East of Eighth Avenue--obviously a New York City address! He was evidently having great difficulty establishing himself--in two letters to Louis Perrault at this time he described himself as "broke": O'Callaghan to L. Perrault, 1 March and 5 May 1839, Perrault Papers, PAC, MG24-B37, vol. 2.

preparation, public spirit, unanimity & c. and which, it is impossible for me to be a judge of. I doubt indeed if in Lower Canada the expectation will be realized."¹⁰² Nonetheless, there was a good deal of excitement north of the border due to expectations of an American invasion, and Robert Nelson was reported to be in high spirits.¹⁰³ But O'Callaghan did not want to get too involved with the conspirators:

Mackenzie has been at me again yesterday to persuade me to join their Society, but I have again persisted in declining, as well from principle as from other considerations. As an inducement, he told me, confidentially, that the Vice President of the United States, Johnson, and Henry Clay of Kentucky, the Whig candidate for the Presidency, have joined and are members....Has Mr. Clay taken this step from love of Canadians, from hatred of England, or on party grounds--to make unto himself friends prior to the coming Presidential Election?¹⁰⁴

The American political situation was of crucial importance to the exiles' hopes of a resurgence in their fortunes. The United States was at this point playing a rôle in Canadian affairs similar to that of France in Irish politics during the 1790's, when the threat or reality of invasion was of constant concern to the British. But O'Callaghan was by now sceptical of the chances of a successful patriote attack on Canada, and was determined not to join Mackenzie's secret society, the American unit of the Hunters' Lodges or Frères Chasseurs. He also doubted the wisdom of the Upper Canadian leader's plan of holding a large meeting in New York, followed by a series of lectures across the

¹⁰² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 8 November 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3217.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 3218.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3218-19.

United States, once trouble had broken out in Canada. O'Callaghan was uncertain whether he should participate in such a meeting if it came about, for "I have no great expectations from it, for I fear the sympathies of the influential classes here, so far from the frontier, cannot be aroused unless the Patriotes obtain some decided advantage, and maintain it."¹⁰⁵

By the next day it was known in New York that Lower Canada was once again in a state of rebellion.¹⁰⁶ But O'Callaghan was soon despondent. He wrote on 12 November: "I fear...that Nelson is ~~not~~ properly supported. A letter from the latter written here previously to his moving into Canada stated that it was predetermined to rise at Mtl., Quebec, Sorel, Chambly, St. Johns & c.--but as yet I do not see with what effect. The 1st was the day fixed, but it was over in Upper Canada without a move & in L.C. without much effect."¹⁰⁷ Mackenzie gave a lecture the next day "on the cause of Canadians, and there is to be a public meeting on Wednesday at Vauxhall Gardens in this city [New York] to express sympathy for the Canadians."¹⁰⁸ O'Callaghan seems to have taken no part in these demonstrations of support for the rebel cause.

On the thirteenth O'Callaghan knew that, once again, the rebels

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 9 November 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3221. He wrote of a related issue in the same letter: "I cannot understand the arresting again of our friends unless as far as L.-M. Viger and Donegan are concerned, it be to break down the People's Bank. The others, I presume, are to be hostages. You will see that an express is being sent to Bermuda to prevent our friends leaving there."

¹⁰⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 12 November 1838, *ibid.*, p. 3226.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

in Lower Canada had been defeated.¹⁰⁹ This insurrection, based upon the secret military organization of the Frères Chasseurs in Lower Canada (which had first been set up in July of 1838 and much resembled the Defenders of Ireland in their secrecy, their peasant/artisan social composition, and their levelling program) was as unsuccessful as the rising of a year earlier.¹¹⁰ And once again, despite the political forces opposed to them, it was in the end military power which crushed them.¹¹¹ And that military force, both professional and volunteer, spoke primarily English, or Mohawk.¹¹² Thus, it was inevitable that national origin once again played its part in the perception of what was fundamentally a matter not only of ethnicity, but of class interest and political orientation as well. But by the fall of 1838 this verity had been well concealed by the machinations of the government and its Tory allies, the gullibility and ignorance of the common people, and the pre-

¹⁰⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 13 November 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3232-33.

¹¹⁰ Clark, Movements, p. 316.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 450.

¹¹² A. "Return of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Privates of the Loyal Volunteers of Lower Canada, who have been killed or wounded in Action with the Rebels or Brigands:--or otherwise Injured while on active Service;--Also of Royal Subjects who may have similarly suffered, and the circumstances of their respective Families" of 1838. includes thirty-two English/Scottish names, one Irish, three French and six of uncertain origin: "Lower Canada: Rebellion of 1837," PAC, MG24-B82, 3 pp. A list of the members of the Missisquoi Militia on 17 August 1838 demonstrates that the body was composed of fifty-one Englishmen and thirteen of uncertain origin; "Missisquoi Militia 1837," PAC, MG24-G61. And documents with the names of those who were constables in 1838 under "An Ordinance for establishing an efficient system of Police in the Cities of Quebec and Montreal" indicate that twenty-four were English or Scots, seven Irish and none French: PAC, MG24-B4, 8: 599. Large numbers of Mohawks and other Indians also participated on the government side after their reserves were threatened.

judice of some of the rebel leaders. Thus it was that the rebels at Châteauguay, according to testimony at one of the subsequent trials, automatically took prisoner "all the inhabitants of British origin."¹¹³ And another witness stated that the rebels had risen "to take away the arms of the Scotch."¹¹⁴ Their aim, one rebel stated, was "to abolish the "lods et ventes," and that they were now for Nelson and Papineau, and were resolved to succeed or die. They said the rising was general --that they expected five thousand Americans in to assist them--that Montreal, Chateauguay, and Laprairie were taken."¹¹⁵ And while Robert Nelson was perhaps the new rebellion's most prominent leader, of those tried after the outbreak, almost all were French Canadians.¹¹⁶

The aftermath, when such ethnic animosity has been called to the fore, was characteristically brutal. O'Callaghan reported that "the British stripped all the dead of every particle of clothing and any property on them, and plundered the Houses they fired."¹¹⁷ And even the aristocratic Jane Ellice, who was a prisoner for some days, reported that after her rescue, "the village was still burning; women & children

¹¹³ Report of the State Trials before a General Court Martial held at Montreal in 1838-39, 2 vols. (Montreal: Armour and Ramsay, 1839): Testimony of John McDonald, merchant of Châteauguay, 1:27.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.: Testimony of Pierre Rochon, farmer of Châteauguay, 1:71.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.: Testimony of David Normand, merchant of Beauharnois, 1:314.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.: Index: List of Prisoners tried, with their Conviction or Acquittal, Sentences, & c. & c. & c. One hundred and eleven had French names, three were English and four were of other or uncertain ethnicity.

¹¹⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 13 November 1838, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 2: 3232.

flying in all directions. Such are the melancholy consequences of civil war."¹¹⁸ As in Ireland in 1798 and 1799, it was impossible for the people to resist this suppression effectively, and it left the colonial administration and the Tory faction in both cases very much in the ascendant when it came time to decide upon the disposition of the province. The ultimate power, with the people so divided, rested with the government, and in both cases it was the British who imposed their solution to the problem.

O'Callaghan, therefore, had to resign himself to the realization that his exile was not about to come to a swift end, with a heroic return to Lower Canada. He would have to manage, as best he could, to make for himself a new life. His ties to other exiles and old friends, as well as American sympathizers, continued however, as did his interest in Canadian affairs. But his involvement with Mackenzie's Gazette and his discouragement with the exiles' cause, as well as a lack of financing, seem to have decided him against establishing his own newspaper. Thus when Ludger Duvernay determined that he would set up the Patriote Canadien at Burlington, Vermont, O'Callaghan agreed to sell him a press which had once been used to publish the Canadian Patriot in the

¹¹⁸ Jane Ellice, The Diary of Jane Ellice, ed. Patricia Godsell, (Ottawa: Oberon Press, 1975), p. 143. Those sympathetic to the Frères Chasseurs also had their own advocates of terror. T.S. Brown, safely in Key West, Florida, wrote to Mackenzie: "If the Tories only will in the manner they threaten favor us by butchering a few harmless men the operations of our rising or advancing parties need not be impeded by being compelled to guard or fatten the Tory Aristocrats who fall into our hands." Even after victory was achieved, Brown realized some "troublesome" Tories would remain, and their own brutalities would provide an "excuse" to put them "out of the way": "A dozen of the leading Tories of Montreal or Quebec swinging on the trees would do more to make reasonable people of the rest than all the arguments your Gazette could publish in ten years." T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 25 November 1838, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

Eastern Townships.¹¹⁹ Soon he would even end his contributions to the Gazette.

When O'Callaghan had arrived in New York late in 1837 he undoubtedly had been somewhat bewildered. Yet within weeks he was obviously hoping that an American-assisted invasion would spark a successful revolution in Lower Canada. Papineau had stood aloof from these hopes, and had refused to help with the plans of Mackenzie and Nelson. Perhaps partly in consequence, they had come to naught, and the insurrection in the province itself during November had been easily suppressed. O'Callaghan had reconciled himself gradually to the fact that large-scale American help, indispensable to a reversal of the verdict of 1837, was not likely to be soon forthcoming. Thus, disillusioned but far from despair, he turned his energies more and more to rebuilding his life south of the border.

¹¹⁹ Ludger Duvernay to Louis Perrault, 30 December 1838, Duvernay Correspondence, PAC, MG24-C3, 3: 1253. The Patriote Canadien was published weekly from 7 August 1839 until 6 February 1840. Another patriot paper was being published at this time besides Mackenzie's Gazette: the North American was produced at Swanton from 10 April 1839 until 12 August 1841, published originally by H.J. Thomas and later by J.B. Ryan: see Stephen Kenny, pp. 2-3.

CHAPTER VIII

EXILE

1839-1844

I feel no sort of anxiety about occurrences in that region [Canada]. One thing only can happen to excite any interest now in my breast touching that country, and as there is little prospect of that taking place in my time, I have made up my mind to bide my time.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1839¹

By the beginning of 1839 O'Callaghan had lost any illusions he may have had a year earlier about a triumphal return to Lower Canada backed by an American army. He was still vitally concerned by Canadian affairs but, as this chapter will make clear, he had to concern himself as well with making a living south of the border. It was in many ways a depressing experience, for he was cut off from many old friends, and for others he now had, or would soon develop, an overwhelming lack of respect. Yet he remained on good terms with his fellow exiles, Papineau and Mackenzie, and he increasingly turned his interest to history and a time before his own misfortunes. For as he wrote to Mackenzie early in 1838, "Canada politics afford nothing new. Despotism is despotism and will continue to be so, until it terminates. How or when that termination is to be brought about, is for wiser men than I to say."² Thus

¹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 28 November 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

² O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 8 May 1839, *ibid.*

O'Callaghan would become less actively involved in Canadian affairs-- more of an observer and more detached in his observations than those more intimately concerned. This chapter will follow O'Callaghan then as he looked to the north with an eye perhaps more acute, although now remote.

In Canada, Lord Durham was proceeding with his mission. Early in the year O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau that Durham planned "to unite all the colonies under one government." Nor was the government to be confederate, but rather a strong central government. The separate colonies would maintain only a very limited, municipal type of administration. O'Callaghan loathed the idea, but felt that its eventual consequences would in fact be beneficial:

However unjustifiable and atrocious such a proceeding may be, it will not fail, if carried out, in emancipating the Colonies much sooner than otherwise may be expected. It wd. be dealing out the same measure of punishment to the Loyal and Disloyal-- which would, I should think, cause much indignation among the former. The Ellices have so much at heart the "swamping" of the French Canadians that I would not be surprized [sic] to see it proposed.³

Whatever might occur in Canada, the exiles had to earn a living, at least temporarily, south of the border. O'Callaghan himself had recently changed his lodgings in New York "in the hopes of picking up a few crumbs," but as yet had "done nothing in his profession!" Mackenzie was heading for the frontier where he was to meet Robert Nelson at Rochester. The Upper Canadian leader, O'Callaghan noted in a letter to

³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 7 January 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3280.

Papineau, was about to move "his family and establishment to Rochester, but I doubt much if he will be encouraged there. He seems not to be a very general favorite. He will, if he can, get up another brouhaha agst. Canada, but I am not sufficiently acquainted with the materials he has to work on, to say whether he will succeed."⁴ Mackenzie's behavior contrasted markedly with that of the almost reclusive Papineau, who was still holed up at Albany. All of them were, of course, under a good deal of stress, and their reactions naturally differed. The frustration alone must have been at times almost unbearable. In the case of O'Callaghan, he found himself, trained in medicine and experienced in journalism and politics, and nearing his forty-second birthday, alone in a strange land and virtually unemployed. But as difficult as it must have been for him, or even for Mackenzie, no one had fallen as far and as fast as Papineau, and his continued symptoms of something akin to shock are perhaps not surprising in a man of his aristocratic and high-strung temperament.

The British were evidently toying with the idea of reaching some sort of settlement with the exiles, so as to prevent further annoyance along the Canadian frontier. Papineau had been visited as early as the fall of 1838 by a representative of Lord Durham, who asked him his views on amnesty. O'Callaghan had been present at the interview and reported that Papineau received him "extremely coolly" for he considered Durham "the creature and agent of the Tories in Canada." O'Callaghan himself was asked his opinion, and he replied: "I would never consent to go back

⁴ Ibid., p. 3281.

at the expense of the last iota of my rights as a Citizen."⁵ Early in 1839 Papineau was again approached, this time by Andrew Buchanan, the British consul at Washington. O'Callaghan warned him to beware, since the man was known to act without authorization:

Your determination to suffer persecution rather than be a party to any arrangement that will not be based on the principle of governing through the majorities of the People is such as does you honor, and will be approved of by all good men. If I am to judge the Ministers' policy towards Canada by the language of the Morning Chronicle of London, I should doubt if they will subscribe to that principle. That Ministerial paper says, the contest is no longer one of principle, but of races. French against British. Canada must be Anglified forthwith, and that the time is past to talk about the rights of the French Canadians under Treaties of Capitulation & Acts of Parliament. If these are the sentiments of ministers...you perceive that your principles and theirs do not accord....Should it turn out differently, and should they now desire to govern on the principles of justice, you know me sufficiently well to render it unnecessary for me to add, there is none through whom I should wish to see the blessing of good government extended to Canada in preference to you. It is I fear idle to expect to win it by the sword at present & for years to come. If it can be secured by honorable mediation, it is time to put an end to the misery the Provinces are suffering.⁶

But good government, at least in O'Callaghan's sense of the term, was not about to dawn on the Canadian political scene. As in the Ireland of 1799 and 1800, the forces of authority were in the ascendant.

⁵ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 1 October 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. In the same letter O'Callaghan indicated that he considered the possibility of a war between Britain and the United States unlikely due to the military unpreparedness of the latter power.

⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 January 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-82, 3: 3293. In a letter to Mackenzie, Falconer had asked if Buchanan was "an active spy.": *ibid.*, p. 3295.

Mackenzie's supporters had held a convention attended by seventy-three delegates which had elected a Directory of five. But O'Callaghan was not convinced of his prospects of success: "he talks of being in Toronto in three months. He had better take care that he will not be in Toronto rather as a prisoner than as a president."⁷ But Mackenzie was a conspirator to the marrow, and stubborn, as O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau:

He asked me to join the Society & put forward various arguments, but they were without avail. To his first question "whether I wd. not join?" I replied "Certainly not." He seems displeased, said I was such another as Mr. Papineau, and there it has ended for the present. It is my determination not to join this or any other secret Society. I mention these things to prepare you for perhaps a similar line of argument and the same demands.

O'Callaghan also reported that, if a rising occurred in Upper Canada, a diversion was to be created in the lower province. The prospect evidently worried him, as he commented:

I presume Dr. Wolfred Nelson will not sanction it, although I should not be astonished if an attempt were made to win him over. I wish he were near you...at Albany. The only obstacle to their future movements that they acknowledge is the want of a regularly educated military leader. Where this sine qua non is to be found is not yet apparent.... From what I hear of the feeling on the Lower Canada frontier, I conclude Drs. Côté and R. Nelson are unpopular and without influence there.⁸

⁷ Ibid., p. 3294.

⁸ Ibid. Mackenzie's Directory had \$20,000 worth of provisions and munitions on the frontier which O'Callaghan considered "rather a small capital to commence with." And Henry Chapman had written to O'Callaghan that he was concerned that border raids and constant plotting would prolong the suspension of the constitution in Lower Canada.

The divisions among the exiles, inevitable in the face of constant setbacks, were growing wider, and there was an evident concern among the more responsible among them that no more desperate measures be undertaken.

O'Callaghan was meanwhile trying to find employment, and was at the moment applying for the vacant editorship of a newspaper called the New Era. It was unfortunately in dire financial straits, and he had been refused, although he had offered to work for a low wage, if necessary. Very reluctantly he asked Papineau to intervene on his behalf: "I am sorry to trouble you knowing as I do that you have already too many things to annoy you, but I hope that you will pardon me. I assure you it is particularly disagreeable to me to speak or write of it."⁹ The doctor never got the position. He was really down on his luck.

O'Callaghan was feeling increasingly remote from Canadian affairs, and was uncertain as to Durham's plan for the Canadas: "I must confess that so many strange things have occurred these last years, that we must not be surprised at any thing now that takes place."¹⁰ Among the exiles confusion, suspicion and conflicting purposes continued to

⁹ Ibid., p. 3295.

¹⁰ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 27 January 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3309.

reign supreme, while Papineau maintained his negotiations with the British authorities through Buchanan. Mackenzie, meanwhile, was still trying to foment trouble along the border.¹¹ O'Callaghan himself believed by now that any action taken without support from the American government was "madness" and that the President, Martin Van Buren, was unlikely to help because he was afraid of war with Great Britain.¹² By March Papineau had departed for Paris, in an effort to gain diplomatic backing there, and O'Callaghan consoled his wife on his absence, which had adversely affected her health.¹³ He now undoubtedly felt lonelier than ever.

Durham's report saw the light of day soon after, and O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau in Paris:

It is possible that when the contents of that report become known in Upper Canada, to which the propositions are most favorable, that they will diminish

¹¹ O'Callaghan noted that he would not mention Papineau's negotiations with Buchanan to Mackenzie since he was "full of war" and it would be like "putting a lighted candle into a barrel of gunpowder." O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 January 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3293-95. Later O'Callaghan would be very concerned that Papineau would think he had been indiscreet to Mackenzie about this matter, and assured him that he had remarked only that Buchanan was staying at the same hotel as the French-Canadian leader and "Dr. Nelson." O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 27 January 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3309-3311.

¹² O'Callaghan to Louis Perrault, 24 February 1839, Perrault Papers, PAC, MG24-B37, 2: 56-57.

¹³ O'Callaghan to Julie Papineau, 8 March 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3364. The doctor's thoughts were evidently beginning to stray towards the subject of women in his exile, and he demonstrated the charming manner for which he was renowned in a passage of the same letter: "Pray say, . . . to Miss Azalie how highly I esteem her recollections of me. She is a charming child, and from the account M. Papineau gave me of her--every person must be in love with her. For that reason I must stay away from Albany, lest I too may fall a victim to her amiable qualities." *ibid.*, p. 3365.

the discontent so much, as deprive M. Mack. of all hopes from that quarter; and thus possibly the proposed measures may be postponed....It is unnecessary for me to say any thing on the merits of Durham's report. The Canadians refused to hurrah for him or to get up meetings and addresses for him, and he is now their enemy--and has made up a report a tissue of sophistry--partiality--with a sprinkling of falsehood.¹⁴

And in a letter to Louis Perrault he predicted that the Tories and Family Compact in Upper Canada would be far from pleased, for the report gave their opponents "all they want--a responsible executive." That it would undercut the plans of the exiles anxious to invade did not disturb him--he, like Perrault, was of the "peace party" and hoped the Lower Canadians would thus be spared the necessity of making further "diversions."¹⁵

O'Callaghan, still in quest of a successful medical practice, moved back from New York to Albany during the spring of 1839.¹⁶ He wrote Papineau from there and advised him to abandon his mission to Europe.¹⁷ But Papineau could not easily turn his back on his hopes for his people. It was not by any means easy for the Irishman either, but he had already left one homeland behind. An encore is always easier to bear, if only because one realizes the necessity of acceptance.

¹⁴ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 1 April 1839, *ibid.*, p. 3386.

¹⁵ O'Callaghan to Louis Perrault, 2 April 1839, Perrault Papers, PAC, MG24-B34, vol. 2.

¹⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 May 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3425.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* Earlier Louis Perrault had written to O'Callaghan that "the unsettled state of things in the French capital" was making Papineau's prospects very uncertain, which Papineau's enclosed letter to him made clear: L. Perrault to O'Callaghan, 14 May 1839, Perrault Papers, PAC, MG24-B34, vol. 2. Papineau's letter was dated 7 April.

O'Callaghan would for the rest of his life analyse the past; Papineau would pursue the chimera of trying to undo it.

By June of 1839 O'Callaghan was convinced that the unsettled state of affairs in Europe meant continued misery for "a million of People adjoining the North Pole, on the continent of America," a situation which he considered yet another evidence of the necessity of independence for Canada, which "can never arrive at any thing like prosperity, or settled contentment until it is detached from its present state of political dependance [sic]." The condition of the colonies was deplorable: "Suspicion and insolence on the part of the oppressors. Hatred and a desire for Revenge on the part of the oppressed." Nor did he consider improvement imminent, for the political turmoil in England made the reestablishment of the Constitution unlikely, "and the continuance of Despotism will only render more certain the continuance of discontent and all the other bad passions consequent thereon."¹⁸ He had heard that the Upper Canadian Tories were enraged at Durham's Report, while in London "the Queen has sent down a Message in favor of the Union. Old Nelson says the act, even if it shd. pass, will not go into operation 'till 1841. Is it not singular that their old system lasted just about half a century. I doubt if the new system will last so long."¹⁹

Mackenzie was meanwhile being tried in New York State for "breach of Neutrality."²⁰ By the fall he was in prison, and O'Callaghan's mood

¹⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 12 June 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3441.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 3443.

²⁰ Ibid.

was tired and bitter. He wrote to Mackenzie, "a prisoner of the United States, in the American Bastile," that he had little news of Canada, but did not really care.²¹ Yet he found the United States far from hospitable either:

After the experience I have reapt since I came to these States...it was my wisest choice to return to my profession and renounce politicks....There was not a particle of feeling among all the Newspapers either in this city [Albany], Washington or New York, for a Canadian Editor hustled out of house and home through love of the Democratic principle.²²

He complained that "panderers to party spirit or caterers for moral depravity" could easily find employment in American journalism, "but there was no encouragement for you or me. To be a waiter on such cold hearted, unfeeling beings 'with my proud, independent stomach could ill agree'."²³ But O'Callaghan's faith in American democracy remained firm.

²¹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 28 November 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. O'Callaghan was not entirely sympathetic to Mackenzie's plight. "Why do you grumble so hard about your hard lot in the Bastile? I'm told the Government (U.S.) allows you \$3½ per week for board. Is this so? I wish they would allow me the like sum. I regret, however, that you are persecuted so much in your dungeon. All the phials of wrath spoken of in the Apocalypse seem to be showered down on your devoted wig.... Rochester Jail will be damned to all eternity in history after your sojourn there." Mackenzie had been referring to the prison in which he was incarcerated, the Monroe county Jail in Rochester, New York, as "the American Bastile" in the dateline of Mackenzie's Gazette since 17 August 1838. Later, angry at Van Buren for not securing his release, he would refer to it as "Van Buren and Victoria's Bastile": Mackenzie's Gazette, 28 March 1840.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

In Albany, O'Callaghan had been trying mightily to establish a medical practice, and had joined the Albany County Medical Society.²⁴ But even these efforts were meeting with scant success.

I get on slowly here. I creep rather than walk. I could have been in practice seven months here, and \$20 would cover all my receipts from the Americans. Indeed I never have prescribed for more than two of them. So much for "Sympathy"! My brother Medicos are about equally generous....Only one of them has had the politeness to put his foot within my office since I came to this place and he called on business.²⁵

Confined almost exclusively to Irish patients, O'Callaghan had considerable time on his hands, and was becoming more and more involved in historical research.²⁶

Among the exiles, plans and recriminations continued apace. Some were trying to ignite another uprising, but Wolfred Nelson was advising caution, which pleased O'Callaghan who believed enough rebels had already been transported.²⁷ And if Robert Nelson was planning another invasion he did not want to hear about it, for "the fewer who know it,

²⁴ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3507; and Monet, "O'Callaghan," p. 555.

²⁵ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 28 November 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

²⁶ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3507; and Monet, "O'Callaghan," p. 555.

²⁷ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3507.

the better will the secret be kept."²⁸ O'Callaghan was somewhat depressed. Surrounded by conspiracy and deceit, treachery and stealth, he felt isolated. He wrote to Papineau's son Amédée:

I have no news from Canada, nor from any place else. I don't see any paper except Mac's, and a N.Y. Locofoco paper. I write to nobody and nobody writes to me, and my time I pass over my books, or pestle and mortar in my back office, except when I am at my meals, or visiting my patients. So you see I am now but a stupid companion, either by letter or in propria personâ.²⁹

Yet even in the midst of his despair, there was humour and even hope left in O'Callaghan. In the same letter he referred to the two daugh-

²⁸ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 28 November 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. He reported that he had received information that Brien's life had been "saved in consequence of his having given the govt. information of all the plans of the Patriots, and thus in a manner betrayed his associates....It was in consequence of this information that Brien was not sent to Botany Bay with the rest. Poor human nature is weak. Dr. Wolfred writes me that Bouchette and Marchesault when in Jail the Winter before last in Mtl., made depositions against your father and me! Tout le monde, cher Amédée, est fou, je crois, que vous et moi....The less we have to do with weak men the better, until better times. At present dog seems to be eating dog, the world over."

²⁹ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3508. Faced with the choice of returning home, some other exiles were deeply troubled. Wolfred Nelson wrote to Ludger Duvernay on 21 September 1841: "Je ne retournerai pas cet automne en Canada;--Peut-être n'y vais-je pas du tout--Mais mes raisons sont fondées sur d'autre, que sur d'objection Politique; Il ce peut, pourtant que j'y retournerai ce printemps. Si j'avais une opinion ou un avis à vous donner certainement ça sera de retourner--vous avez assez souffert pour une Patrie qui ne vous a payé de retour pour vos sacrifices et votre dévouement--Vous rejoindrez pas les ennemis de votre pays pour tant cela--mais songé à vous même--et si vous pouvez mieux faire là qu'ici, certainement je n'hysiterais pas. Et vous pouvez la faire sans sacrifices de vos principes ne de votre quant à soit. En allant tête levé, independamment et en Patriot, vous exciterez plutôt la bonne disposition des Tories: Duvernay Papers, PAC, MG24-C3, 5: 2174.

ters of an acquaintance, and counselled the young man: "if you should come down in the course of this Winter, you will have an opportunity to make love to one, or both of the young ladies if you like. Nil desperandum, is, I presume your motto."³⁰

In the absence of the exiles, political developments continued to unfold in Lower Canada, and the Tories intensified their efforts to capture the Irish vote. The clergy continued to try to wean the Hibernians from radical influences, although one of their own number, Father John Moore who had been stationed in the Eastern Townships, was suspected of patriote sympathies in 1838.³¹ Thus Bishop Lartigue saw fit to promulgate the Bishop of Kingston's Address to the Irish in both French and English within the province.³² Nor was the clergy prepared to allow the exiles free rein in the United States. O'Callaghan wrote to Amédée Papineau from Albany:

Le prêtre Macmahon de Quebec, has been here for some days. He officiated in the Catholic Church at the south end of this City. He is as violent a Tory as ever. He has been talking, I am told, very strongly against Papa, et les autres soumités. He intends spending a few days at Saratoga Springs before he returns. You will have an opportunity of going to confess all your rebellious sins to him, but whether he will forgive you or not is another question.³³

³⁰ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3507.

³¹ Mgr. Ignace Bourget to Michael Power, curé of Ste. Martine, 19 October 1838, RAPQ (1946), p. 175.

³² Bishop Lartigue to Bishop McDonell, 15 January 1839, RAPQ (1946), p. 90.

³³ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 15 October 1839, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3507.

The clergy were not taking any chances--they might oppose a union of the Canadas and the plans for anglicization, but revolution they would not countenance.

Lewis Drummond was now becoming the leading Irish reformer but he was a far more moderate man than O'Callaghan, and was to act as the Hibernian leader during the period of transition from O'Callaghan's radicalism to Thomas D'Arcy McGee's conservatism.³⁴ It was a time for recrimination among the patriotes and even O'Connell was displeased at the patriotes for revolting.³⁵ Among the exiled community hope was fading, and the grim realities of their circumstances were becoming all too clear. O'Callaghan was trying to recover the financial assets he had been forced to abandon in Montreal. He finally received some money, much of it from the sale of government stock!³⁶ For Mackenzie, still confined to prison early in 1840, life was considerably more bleak, and he complained that the jail in which he resided had been built on a marsh and was "really unhealthy."³⁷

The British were continuing their efforts to woo Papineau, and O'Callaghan reported to Mackenzie that several English liberals had

³⁴ See Lewis Drummond's proposal of 1840 re electoral strategy, Duvernay Papers, PAC, MG24-C3, 4: 1715-16.

³⁵ H.A. Gauvin to Ludger Duvernay, 12 March 1840, Duvernay Papers, PAC, MG24-C3, 4: 1766-67. He wrote: "Il blâme beaucoup les Chefs Canadiens d'avoir excité le Peuple à la Révolte, lui qui l'a prêché pendant 15 ans je crois que la Reine lui aura fourré un rouleau d'or dans le cul comme l'on fait aux cochons avec un baton pour les empêcher de 'crier'."

³⁶ Alexander Galt to O'Callaghan, 25 September 1839, O'Callaghan Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter LC), vol. 1.

³⁷ W.L. Mackenzie to E.B. O'Callaghan, 28 February 1840, *ibid.*

travelled to Paris "endeavouring to intrigue our friend there out of his senses, and to persuade him that Lord John Russell is friendly to

Canada."³⁸ O'Callaghan believed the British were intent on retaining their hold over the Canadas and "will not be shuffled off this continent without a struggle," because they saw the colonies as an essential port of entry to the United States, which helped undercut American tariffs. The Canadas also guaranteed the security of the West Indies and gave the British vital naval bases. O'Callaghan was convinced that the British fear of the United States would gradually reduce their naval supremacy and make Great Britain into a second or third-rate power. His historical researches had led him to believe that the British were occupying in North America the position held by France before 1759: "The rivalry, the interests, the animosities are still the same. The scene is still the same. It is the same chess-board--the game is still the same game."³⁹ But the British were reinforcing their position in the north, and O'Callaghan considered that the "Americans could have accomplished in six months in 1837-8, what will now cost her [sic] probably as many years--yet, even at this cost, the thing will have to be accomplished if the permanent security of this Republic is worth a struggle."⁴⁰

But O'Callaghan was not willing to countenance any further action along the border, for he now considered such proposals futile and absurd. This had caused him to "fall out" with many other exiles, but he still could not respond to Mackenzie's plea that he not give up the

³⁸ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 1 April 1840, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

³⁹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 4 July 1840, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

ship. O'Callaghan believed that it was "waterlogged" and he thought the day it would reach land was far off.⁴¹ Thus he had come fully if unenthusiastically to accept Papineau's passive stance. This made him unpopular with many of those who were critical of the French-Canadian leader, including the editors of the North American, an exile paper published at Swanton, Vermont, which often reflected the thinking of Dr. Côté. It compared Papineau, the "peace-loving" O'Callaghan and the "turncoat" LaFontaine unfavorably with the Nelson brothers.⁴²

O'Callaghan was becoming less critical of Van Buren by 1840. Mackenzie, on the other hand, was now furious at the Democratic President for not releasing him from prison.⁴³ O'Callaghan argued that he should not be held responsible for the decision of the jury. Furthermore, the doctor, who was not yet an American citizen and--he assured Mackenzie--was not seeking a government position, still considered Van Buren's political philosophy "to be the greatest good of the greatest number," of which he approved. He was now convinced, moreover, that the president understood the need to annex Canada.⁴⁴ But within a year he had accepted that even that vague hope was not about to be presently fulfilled, for the Americans could not be expected to attack Canada "in

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Stephen Kenny, pp. 2, 15-21. It was published first by H.J. Thomas, then by J.B. Ryan and took a highly anti-clerical line.

⁴³ Mackenzie's dealings with Van Buren were evidently complex. The two would later be bitter enemies, but Wolfred Nelson wrote to Mackenzie that he had talked to a friend of Van Buren's who believed "a secret understanding" existed between the two. Mackenzie's wrath certainly smells of betrayal: see W. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, 8 December 1839, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

⁴⁴ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 4 July 1840, *ibid.*

their present defenceless condition."⁴⁵

The Canadas were formally united by act of the British Parliament on 10 February 1841.⁴⁶ The change was not welcomed by many French Canadians, for both the Catholic Church and most of the old patriotes opposed a settlement which weakened the defenses of French Canada. Thus John Neilson joined with Denis-Benjamin Viger to lead the opposition. Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, however, was already focusing the attention of his supporters, along with those of Robert Baldwin in Upper Canada, on another issue--that of responsible government.⁴⁷ Still, the only overt advocates of the Union in Lower Canada were the English-speaking Tories, who saw salvation in increased trade and the swamping of the French-Canadian electorate and its autonomous government. O'Callaghan believed the Tories would also win the impending elections in both provinces, but had heard that they were still not satisfied: "When they are discontented it is the discontent of the wolf who cannot get mutton enough."⁴⁸ Certainly Durham had thrown them some meaty bones--union and anglicization! But some at least had wanted more--such tidbits as the complete proscription of the French language and the limitation of

⁴⁵ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 21 March 1841, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Careless*, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 58-77; Elizabeth Nish, Racism or Responsible Government (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1967), pp. 1, 23-39; *Careless*, pp. 1-7.

⁴⁸ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 2 March 1841, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

French-Canadian voting rights.⁴⁹

Mackenzie, meanwhile, had been released from prison in the spring of 1840. Shortly afterwards, he had had to cease publication of his Gazette. By the spring of 1841, however, he was intending to start a new paper.⁵⁰ He admitted to O'Callaghan that "if an amnesty had been granted generally, some of our friends, who dare not yet cross over, would have taken advantage of it to agitate quietly on t'other side--but I fear their plans will not be allowed to take effect."⁵¹ The exile was taking its toll politically--and personally. O'Callaghan had lost touch with his family in Ireland--although he must surely share in the blame for this--and, by the time his sister Mary Anne had located him, his mother had died. She entreated him "for God's sake, for the sakes of those who are gone from us" to write to her.⁵²

O'Callaghan had been a widower for six years by 1841, and on 9 May he married Ellen Hawe in Albany. Wölfred Nelson wrote to congratulate him that "like an honest man and a good christian you have taken a wife to yourself."⁵³ Less than a year later she would give birth to a daughter "who grows well and healthily and promises to be a

⁴⁹ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 33. The Montreal Gazette and Montreal Herald led the charge. See also André Lefebvre, La Montreal Gazette et le nationalisme Canadien (1835-1842) (Montreal: Guérin, 1970), pp. 151-52, 172-73.

⁵⁰ W.L. Mackenzie, Rochester N.Y. to O'Callaghan, 5 April 1841, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁵¹ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 15 March 1841, *ibid.*

⁵² Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 4 May 1841, *ibid.*

⁵³ W. (?) Nelson to O'Callaghan, 21 July 1841, *ibid.*

great comfort to her parents, if Providence spare her."⁵⁴ The little girl was named after O'Callaghan's sister.⁵⁵ Unfortunately she died quite young.⁵⁶

By 1842 the few remaining exiles were a motley lot. O'Callaghan was practicing medicine in Albany, studying history, and contributing articles to the Northern Light, a newspaper "devoted to free discussion."⁵⁷ According to the historian Jacques Monet, it "upheld the interests of the working class."⁵⁸ Francis Shaw Guy states that it "is accredited with instigating movements to enlighten the workman, raise the standard of wages, increase not merely the amount but the quality of manufactures, and the general development of industrial conditions."⁵⁹ Because of the anti-rent movement in New York at the time, O'Callaghan began researching the New Netherlands, writing articles in the Northern Light. From this beginning grew his interest in the history of the state. His contributions to the journal were frequent from 1842 until its demise in September of 1844, and he wrote articles on such varied

⁵⁴ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 4 October 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG23-B2, 3: 3735-36. She was born on Wednesday, 9 March: O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 15 March 1842, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516, p. 4731. O'Callaghan chided Mackenzie that he had now "set abt. overtaking you in the great anti Malthusian scheme of peopling this 'great globe itself'!"

⁵⁵ Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 15 October 1842, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁵⁶ Guy, pp. 9-10. The little girl died at two years of age.

⁵⁷ Northern Light, Albany, New York, vols. 1-4, April 1841-September 1844.

⁵⁸ Monet, "O'Callaghan," p. 555.

⁵⁹ Guy, p. 27.

subjects as the Oregon territory, the "Insurrection of Central Italy in 1828," and "France and its Financial System." He also reviewed a book on the history of Long Island and translated poems by the French poet Pierre-Jean de Béranger such as "The Holy Alliance of the People," "The Old Flag," "Lafayette in America," and "Waterloo."⁶⁰ He even concocted his own elegy entitled "The American Flag" which concluded:

Up with that Flag! now let it float upon our own free air,
And let th'oppress'd of every land its generous shelter share;
And as grim war already stamp'd sufficient glory there,
Let white-winged Peace henceforward keep that Flag within
her care.⁶¹

His insertions were liberal and romantic, but seem scarcely devoted to the working class.

Mackenzie was in a truly pitiful condition. Early in 1842 he pleaded with O'Callaghan to put in a good word for him in Albany for he had decided he must accept government office if it were offered--something he had always refused to do in Canada--for he was now "penniless": he could not even travel to the state capital himself because "poverty prevents me" and he was considering declaring himself bankrupt. "Such," he wrote, "is the consequence of trusting the means of my family on the hazard of a Canadn. revolt! at my time of life."⁶²

⁶⁰ *Northern Light*, vol. 2, pp. 129 (November 1842), 142 (December 1842), 143-44 (December 1842), 156-58 (January 1843), 169-72 (February 1843), 191 (March 1843); vol. 3, pp. 3, 13 (May 1843), 36-37 (July 1843), 58, 66-68 (September 1843), 71 (September 1843), 88, 102, 109 (November 1843), 117, 120 (December 1843), 132-35 (January 1844), 137, 169; vol. 4, pp. 29 (July 1844) and 36-39 (July 1844).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1 July 1844: 4: 29.

⁶² W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 26 February 1842, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

He accepted O'Callaghan's decision to "eschew politics," which he seemed now to share because of his abandonment by "old Canada friends" and, he commented sadly: "I may say I never knew what sheer selfishness was till I came to live in these states with a large family. Taught by the experience of such men as me, it is but natural that you should try to avoid the rock on which I split."⁶³ O'Callaghan agreed to help his old friend, although he thought the prospects in Albany looked bleak.⁶⁴ But he tried to get him a job with the Canal Commission--apparently without success.⁶⁵ Mackenzie was nonetheless deeply grateful.⁶⁶

He had certainly not abandoned politics, despite the treachery of his political allies in the United States. If he had a press, he wrote, he would "commence in Albany a thoro' going ultra-democratic paper--oppose hypocrisy where I met it--and go ahead if there were honesty enough in the land to let me."⁶⁷ But Mackenzie was disillusioned with the United States:

I know and grieve at the false aristocratic spirit of the multitude.--I see no crown and sceptre--no orb and ermine--no coronets, ribbons, and stars--but the mean spirit of a bastard aristocracy, is as rife in Rochester as it is in Dublin or Edin.--aye & more so. Let a man be poor and honest, too good to stoop to aught that's mean, and what does the mob consider him good for? Let a man have got rich by usury,...perjury, any vice or crime...and the cring-

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 7 March 1842, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶⁵ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 15 March 1842, *ibid.*

⁶⁶ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 15 March 1842, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

ing throng see in his riches the true test of respectability! He is the true agent for popular measures--the fit man for congress or any thing else connected with delegated power.⁶⁸

Mackenzie's own plight certainly seemed to bear out his contention but he never despaired. By April he was confident of a government post and that he would "be able to get on with a paper here again."⁶⁹ Only two months later, though, O'Callaghan wrote very sympathetically to Amédée Papineau, the son of his old leader, that the "utterly broke" Mackenzie, resident in Rochester, proposed moving to New York and opening a bookstore: "in any intercourse you may have with him you had better be cautious, at the same time treat him with respect and sympathy, for he has really suffered terribly in every way, through his love for Canada."⁷⁰ They had all come a long way from their days of power.

Papineau was still in Paris, and O'Callaghan was anxious to reinvigorate their relationship. He wrote Amédée Papineau on this subject in the summer of 1842, explaining that he had not written to his father because "I am but a poor correspondent now, the excitement of politicks being removed yet my feelings towards friends are unaltered, especially towards your father."⁷¹ By the fall O'Callaghan had overcome his reluctance and wrote to his old leader in Paris:

I have been long and often proposing to myself
the pleasure of writing to you, but the monotony of

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 1 April 1842, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁷⁰ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 1 June 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3736.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 3735-36.

my life here, consisting as it does of mere professional routine, is so uninteresting and devoid of incident that I have been silent from very necessity, until I have now to meet the consequences of my seeming neglect, by being taken for some strange unknown intruder on your privacy, when you open this letter, and my salutations, perchance, considered as the voice of one risen from the dead. But after all it is, may be, better to put a bold face, and say "right off"--"How do you do, Mr. Papineau? How is Mde. Papineau, Lactance, Azille and all the rest of the family? I'm Dr. O'Callaghan who had the pleasure of having been acquainted with you a long time ago, and whom, possibly, you remember having left behind you in Albany. "Oh!" I think I hear you reply--"Tis good for sore eyes to see you, Doctor.--Sit down--and tell us what news you bring."⁷²

He related that he was still practicing medicine in Albany, and that he was happily married. Despite his relative good fortune, however, O'Callaghan was homesick for Canada, "the country of my manhood--all the most agreeable associations of my past life are mixed up with that country, and I still hope that my last resting place shall be there."⁷³

Change, meanwhile, was in the air in the Canadas. Charles Poulet Thomson, Lord Sydenham, had been governor since the fall of 1839. He had been unable to attract much support among French-Canadian politicians, and in January 1842 he bequeathed a very unsettled situation to his successor, Sir Charles Bagot. The supporters of John Neilson and Denis-Benjamin Viger were still intractably opposed to the Union, and found themselves in a rather odd alliance with the Tories of Canada West, who largely shared their opinion on this issue, although for very different reasons. Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine, meanwhile, had been

⁷² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 4 October 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3748.

⁷³ Ibid.

manoeuvring for the leadership of French Canada, and had tied his claim to the issue of responsible government, allying himself with Robert Baldwin in Canada West.⁷⁴ The new governor, anxious to attract French-Canadian support and far more flexible on the issue of ministerial responsibility to the Assembly than had been Sydenham, convinced LaFontaine to enter a "reform" ministry with Baldwin. On 10 September 1842 LaFontaine entered the government, which won its first vote of confidence shortly afterwards by a vote of fifty-five to five. Only Neilson in Lower Canada dissented.⁷⁵

O'Callaghan was evidently intrigued. He had seen reports in the press that Papineau would soon return to Canada and become Deputy Post Master General under the new regime. The doctor hoped his old leader could soon honorably return, but wrote that he would "not tell you what-berth in the Post Office I expect."⁷⁶ But, while justifiably sceptical, he also seemed to feel vindicated:

Tell me as freely as you used to long ago, when we were together, your opinion of these changes, whether they are anything more in substance than a repetition of the Gosford policy on a bolder and more extensive scale--or whether the millenium indeed is coming when the lion is to lie down with the lamb....Be the result what it may, these recent occurrences are only proving the truth of what the Vindicator warned them would happen, when the Union should be passed--that is, the junction of the Reformers of Upper & Lower Canada, and the consequent impossibility of carrying on the Government except by the aid of those much abused Men. This has now taken place, and England may yet regret--sorely

⁷⁴ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 35-91.

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 91-104.

⁷⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 4 October 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3750.

regret--the act she passed of Legislative Union
between Upper & Lower Canada.⁷⁷

But O'Callaghan was, to some extent at least, misreading the situation--as did many others. LaFontaine's policies were based on a premise very different from Papineau's--the French-Canadian middle classes would seek through him the power Papineau had failed ultimately to achieve, without risking again the social upheaval which had been threatened in 1837.⁷⁸ In the end Papineau would become one of LaFontaine's bitterest foes.

The exile community was shrinking by 1842, and O'Callaghan was in close touch only with Papineau and Mackenzie, who was secretary of the Mechanics' Institute in New York and, O'Callaghan reported to Papineau, "as jealous and suspicious as ever." Robert Nelson, T.S. Brown and Dr. Côté were the others; O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau, who along "with you and me--the Alpha and Omega of the Outlaws--are all that remain of Gosford's pets out of their Country."⁷⁹

Papineau, despite O'Callaghan's hope for his return to Canada, wrote that he had decided to remain in private life. But he was sympathetic to what he believed were Bagot's sincere attempts at conciliation prompted by the growing strength of Canada and the United

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ See Careless, p. 25. His contention, however, that LaFontaine was defending French society against "dynamic English commercial capitalism" and replacing men like Papineau and Viger who were "most closely listed with the seigneurial order and the possessor of large landed estates" is a misconstrual of the forces at work during the 1830's, which were certainly not dynamic English capitalism against regressive French-Canadian feudalism.

⁷⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 4 October 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3750.

States.⁸⁰ He believed the Upper Canadian reform leader, Robert Baldwin, was an honest and enlightened man in whom he had more confidence than in any of the other ministers, who were honest but "peu habiles" and could easily be duped into believing that "les Canadiens ont plus obtenu par l'Union qu'ils n'auraient obtenu sans elle, et que...ils doivent l'appuyer telle qu'elle est." He believed that Baldwin would insist on a good jury law, which would make it possible to reform the Legislative Council "dans lequel il y a plus de 30 ennemis passionnés [sic] de toute législation libérale," and to proportionately redistribute the electorate.⁸¹

O'Callaghan was convinced by December that he was less than popular with the government ministers and other influential reformers in Canada East, as letters which he had sent to James Leslie, Jacob DeWitt and LaFontaine himself, "congratulating the country, on the success of those principles for which we all in common had been so long, and so ardently contending," were not even acknowledged. He had also learned that, when John Ryan had suggested to DeWitt and Lemoine that O'Callaghan might serve as the editor of a newspaper to forward the reform cause in the province, rather than that party adopting the Times of William Walker, Lemoine had replied that the former editor of the

⁸⁰ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 16 November 1842, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1, and Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3766-75. Papineau felt the British Tories might have the confidence to take positive action in Canada, whereas the Whigs were insecure and that Sydenham's "infamies" had been due to this.

⁸¹ Ibid.

Vindicator was "blackballed" as "too violent."⁸² "Talking this over with Perrault," O'Callaghan wrote, "I am given to understand that the Banque du Peuple have never forgiven me the stand I took in 1836 against the suspension of Specie Payments by the Bank that year."⁸³ But O'Callaghan was unrepentant, for he would "much rather suffer for a good cause than sanction what I considered a [sic] improper act." Nor was this his only offense:

Another, and perhaps, an equally unpardonable sin of mine was the persevering, uncompromising opposition the Vindicator offered to the Gosford administration. When I examine the influential portions of the present Kingston Ministry, I see the Quebec influence which leaned so strongly towards Gosford--is almost paramount there. It would I suppose be something, next to High Treason to have the old Vindicator or its Editor [in] any way connected with the present regime--that "violent" man who used to print the Declaration of American Independance [sic] every 4th of July--who preached up so pertinaciously to the people the necessity of encouraging domestic manufactures--and dispensing with the payment of Tribute, when they could avoid it. By this class I was always considered "too violent"--and I am therefore made to feel the effects of it, as far as the Banque du Peuple and the Gosford influence goes.⁸⁴

⁸² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 8 (or 6) December 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3785. --The Pilot of Francis Hincks would soon be established to fill the void: Beaulieu and Hamelin, pp. 115-16.

⁸³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 8 (or 6) December 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3787. He continued: "I was then right--the event has proved it. All the Banks in this Country, south of New York, failed since in specie payments which they suspended, but the ablest financiers in New York resisted the movement, kept on the honest track, and the dishonored banks were obliged to retrace their steps, but at a great loss to the industrious portion of the community. My offense has never been forgiven, and like those sins against the Holy Ghost, I suppose never will--But never mind--Right is, notwithstanding, right."

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 3787-88.

It was a heartfelt complaint from a man who had never compromised his principles on a matter of importance, and never would. In this sense, despite his talent for it, he was at a severe disadvantage in political manoeuvring, and had never had the easy amenability to circumstance of LaFontaine. He concluded his letter to Papineau with a heartfelt plea: "Come home! You have been away long enough....Let us meet again if it can be done consistently with your honor--for I am beginning to feel as if I should like to hear you tell me what you think of the present & the future. The past is an open book which all can read, and which I trust will not be without profit for us."⁸⁵

O'Callaghan was pleased to hear soon after that Papineau intended to return from France, and he was gaining confidence in the eventual independence of Canada, "notwithstanding Durham's prophecy to the contrary."⁸⁶ He wrote to his old leader that:

The duty of the Patriot, in the meantime, is plain. It is to prepare his fellow Citizens by Education, and habits of intimacy with public affairs, for that change which Time will bring about--to infuse into the rising generation purity of thought--disinterestedness in action--devoted love of Country...and to endeavor to procure the passage of such laws as shall protect the life and liberty of the People from violence or oppression whilst this turn of Colonial existence continues....A good Jury law--a system of municipal government similar to what prevails in New England or this State--Education--a reform in the Legislative Council (what a job!)

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 3789.

⁸⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 14 December 1842, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3798.

Equalization of the representation & a line of policy similar to this throughout is absolutely necessary, or the place is not habitable....But it is very questionable whether much can be obtained in the present precarious state of things at Kingston.⁸⁷

As usual, the doctor's political diagnosis was quite astute. But his hope that Papineau would soon return went unfulfilled, even though he repeated it in the spring of 1843.⁸⁸ Papineau, though, would eventually return to Canada. O'Callaghan would remain where he was, trying through his historical work, if not to convert the Canadians, then at least to keep the American people aware of their past and loyal to the principles of liberty and democracy.

Bagot's governorship had certainly altered the views of some old patriotes as to the possibility of peaceful change in the Canadas. By calling LaFontaine and his supporters to power, the governor had indicated a willingness to accept the principle of a ministry responsible to the Assembly. Henry Chapman wrote to O'Callaghan in the winter of 1843 that the recent changes at first "took my breath away" and he thought of returning to Canada: "it [responsible government] is a great step it gives the majority an immense advantage and it renders the government of the colony under the old system impossible. I hope Mr. Papineau will go back soon. I hear that he intends to do so."⁸⁹ Despite such bright prospects, he hesitated to return because many among the "British Party"

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 30 March 1843; Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3831.

⁸⁹ Henry Chapman to O'Callaghan, 3 March 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

hated him as an apostate for his liberalism and his failure to support the Anglican Church. He did not have O'Callaghan's excuses: "You are an Irishman and a Catholic and your opposition to the 'British' and 'the Church' is rational."⁹⁰

Papineau was not as optimistic, although he supported those who had taken office as they were thus able to oppose the desires of the Tory clique. But he feared that the arrival of a new governor--for Bagot was too ill to continue in his post and was about to be replaced--would signal a renewal of hostilities, as Bagot's system would be overthrown and Sydenham's re-established.⁹¹ He wished to return home--he could appreciate O'Callaghan's ties to the United States, but his were all in Canada--but, he was almost despondent: "Mon retour n'aurait en réalité, j'en suis sûr, nulle influence ni en bien ni mal sur les résolutions du Gr.... Je vous avoue pourtant que j'espère beaucoup plus que je ne crains de l'avenir."⁹² He hoped to see the doctor again to renew their close friendship, now strengthened by the common hardships of exile. But he was well aware of the difficulties of arranging his own return--twice the reformers and Tories had joined together to request the return of the exiles and had been rejected--and he believed that someone very powerful, possibly the "vindictive" Lord

⁹⁰ Ibid. In the end Chapman decided to go to New Zealand as LaFontaine "gave no encouragement" to him to return to Canada as he thought "I might in time take a little of the wind out of his sails. On the whole the prospect in Canada offered nothing but drudge! drudge! with animosity enough to make me very uncomfortable": Chapman to O'Callaghan, 17 June 1843, *ibid.*

⁹¹ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 5 May 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁹² Ibid.

Stanley, was particularly opposed to the return of O'Callaghan and three or four other exiles.⁹³

Despite Papineau's fears, by the fall of 1843 an absolute pardon had been granted by LaFontaine's government to Papineau, O'Callaghan and T.S. Brown, all of whom had been indicted at Montreal in 1839: "In truth," the doctor wrote to Brown, "LaFontaine could not do less, for these were the only indictments for treason to be acted upon, and you will agree with me that it would have caused him considerable embarrassment should any of us have gone in, and demanded a trial."⁹⁴ Thus they were all now free to return to Canada, if they preferred "the frozen North to the sunny South," but as for O'Callaghan, "I am a 'fixture' here for the present, and of my future movements, I can say little, for I know less." He believed Papineau might return in the spring of 1844, although he did not want to embarrass the ministry. But, O'Callaghan noted, the Banque du Peuple was now operating "in close communion" with the Bank of Montreal, and many of their old friends had recently been made magistrates by the new governor, Sir Charles Metcalfe, who had arrived early in 1843. Moreover, La Minerve, once again published by Duvernay, was now "l'organe du Ministère," while the Herald and Gazette had become more liberal.⁹⁵ Thus, O'Callaghan commented, "if you want to travel into strange lands you have only to go back to Canada where

⁹³ Ibid. He also blamed Stanley for the refusal of a general amnesty, in a letter to Mackenzie on the same day: L.-J. Papineau to W.L. Mackenzie, 5 May 1843, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AG, MS 516.

⁹⁴ O'Callaghan to T.S. Brown, St. Augustine, Florida, 5 October 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

even the natures of men are changed, and the Lion is now lying down with the Lamb."⁹⁶

O'Callaghan was continuing to practice medicine in Albany, although he complained that "there are so many M.D.'s of us that the load is scarcely large enough for us all. Some fellows get too much, whilst the slice others obtain is small enough. I cannot complain so far,"⁹⁷ But he was not content--he even wrote T.S. Brown that he was thinking of moving to St. Augustine!⁹⁸ And he had advertised in Mackenzie's newspaper for a "medical partner" in New York or some other major city.⁹⁹ He had time to help a grateful Mackenzie who reported that he "was within an ace of \$1100 a year and an inspector of customs here [in New York]."¹⁰⁰ But he was beginning to immerse himself in research into the early history of New York State, and it was in this area that he would soon find his new vocation.

Mackenzie had moved his Gazette from New York to Rochester in 1839, and had continued its publication there, despite his imprisonment, until the fall of 1840. He had then briefly published another paper

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid. Brown advised him not to move to St. Augustine as there were too many unemployed doctors in Florida. T.S. Brown to O'Callaghan, 29 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁹⁹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, August 1843, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

¹⁰⁰ See W.L. Mackenzie's letters to O'Callaghan of 16, 24 October and 4 December 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

dedicated to Canadian issues, the Volunteer.¹⁰¹ By 1843 he was publishing yet another newspaper, the Examiner, at New York. He had become increasingly involved in American politics and in his attempts to discredit the "aristocratic" former President, Martin Van Buren, whom he now loathed with a passion.¹⁰² Moreover, his views on banks make clear that Mackenzie's populist, and often quixotic, brand of reformism had received no check from his straitened conditions. He wrote to O'Callaghan that banks, which he considered illegal institutions, ruled the United States, and were supported by all the presidential candidates.¹⁰³ As for developments in Canada, he was convinced "that the govt. there will do but little to ameliorate the condition of the people....They do as little as they can even here."¹⁰⁴

O'Callaghan was becoming quite attached to the United States. Unlike Papineau, who had never been able to uproot his soul from the soil of his birthplace, the Irishman had rooted himself anew in a land which he felt was freer than any other he had known. Nevertheless, it must not have been easy for him to decide what to do when he was approached in the winter of 1844 by a group of Quebec City Irishmen who

¹⁰¹ Stephen Kenny, pp. 2-3, 28.

¹⁰² See Mackenzie's letters to O'Callaghan of 16 and 24 October 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1. Van Buren was fundamentally a pragmatic opportunist, which Mackenzie was not, but Mackenzie's bitterness against him was exacerbated by the fact that he had at first been taken in by the very personable president--who proceeded to confound the exiles' schemes of involving the United States in war with Great Britain: see W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 24 October 1843, *ibid.*, and Dictionary of American Biography, 10 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927-64), 10: 152-57.

¹⁰³ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 24 October 1843, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

¹⁰⁴ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 16 October 1843, *ibid.*

were seeking him as the editor of a "respectable" and "liberal" newspaper that they intended to establish.¹⁰⁵ Even O'Callaghan's old opponents of 1837 like Father McMahon were now reported to be in favour of him.¹⁰⁶ But in the end his reply was negative:

Looking however at the Reps. she has in the Assembly, I may be permitted to doubt, which I honestly do, whether a person of my political principles is adapted for that Latitude, or the best to promote the success of yr. paper. By & by when by its policy the government will inflict another stab on the Chief Staple of yr. Trade & complete the reduction of yr. picturesque & beautiful city from her proud eminence as the Capital of the Country, to a second or third rate town, the Liberal Party with the honest independent portion of yr. Citizens may, perhaps, discover that their interests might be better promoted by aiding their Country and rallying around her friends a little more energetically than they seem at present to do.

With these doubts & impressions weighing on my mind, I am constrained to come to the conclusion that the time is not yet arrived when I could, with any advantage to you, or honor to myself, again return to public life & that I shall best serve, just now, the good cause we both wish well by declining

¹⁰⁵ The group included thirty-three Irish inhabitants of Quebec City: John Daly to O'Callaghan, 16 March 1844, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ John Teed, Quebec, to O'Callaghan, 28 February 1844, and (a more formal proposition) John Daly to O'Callaghan, 16 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1. Daly wrote: "as you know the Irishmen of Quebec, you will be better able to judge...of their feelings on this occasion & allow of their disinterested, deep & sincere affection for the person whom they have always considered as the most able supporter of their rights & the Vindicator of their wrongs. We have long felt the disadvantage of our position, without an organ to express our opinions, although forming a large portion of the population of this City & subject daily to the misrepresentations of the different Journals of the Province who differ from us in political and religious principles." As early as 9 February 1844, M. Connolly had written to inform O'Callaghan that the Irish of Quebec City wanted O'Callaghan to edit "The Quebec Herald, & Catholic Advocate": O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

the invitation which you have conveyed to me.¹⁰⁷

Thus O'Callaghan had made what was, in reality, a decision to remain in the United States and nurture the tender roots that he had implanted in that soil. He was, after all, forty-seven years old and he had moved often enough before. He was, moreover, by all appearances, tired of the controversy ever present in public life and was "content to lead a more peaceful life," especially as, sceptical by nature and

¹⁰⁷ O'Callaghan to John Daly, Secretary to The Committee of Irishmen whose intention it is to establish a liberal Newspaper in that City," 30 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1: O'Callaghan would seem to have all but decided to reject the offer a month earlier for he wrote: "Times must have changed, indeed, in Quebec when my return is desired in that city or as Editor of a public paper From my Countrymen in Quebec I have never experienced but the most indulgent kindnesses, as well in a publick [sic] as in a private point of view. To my connexion with them, I have ever looked back with feelings of pleasure, and this testimony, which you communicate, of their continued regard towards me, in exile and in a foreign land, on account of my fidelity towards them; and towards their adopted Country, is but an addition to the many--nay, innumerable marks of their esteem, which I have already received." However, despite the good intentions of her Irish supporters, "I fear much that there are still too many divisions, and that (though I may enjoy many warm hearted and indulgent friends) yet there are other gentlemen of influence who may not look upon me with as much indulgence as you and my other friends, would do--and the consequence would, then, be more prejudicial to yourselves, and to those interests which you are desirous to promote than either you or I would wish. By placing myself in a position where the press I should have in charge would suffer from causes personal to myself alone, you perceive at once that I should be doing you and my other friends more harm than good, and that however strong may be my wishes to be of service to the new project of my Quebec friends; the prospect for my being so, just now, is not as clear as I should wish. By and by, perhaps those prejudices which others entertain honestly, no doubt, though I believe mistakenly, against me, may disappear. Your statement that many of my former opponents would not now object to my being your Editor is evidence of a return to a better state of feeling; and as I entertain no feelings of enmity, opposition or unkindness to any man, but entertain towards all that good will inculcated by our Church, I have every hope that the period is not far distant, when many old sores will be healed up, many old friendships renewed, and many old kindly feelings resuscitated or revived, which nothing, perhaps, should have ever interrupted, or broken." O'Callaghan to John Teed, Quebec, 1 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

experience, he was dubious of the prospects of his version of liberalism in Canada, certainly not without cause.¹⁰⁸

The parallels there with Ireland were too stark, for "in both the few, [are] interested in the continuance of abuses, monopolies, and privileges from which they derive place, power, wealth and patronage for them and their's, against the hardworking, long suffering, deeply

¹⁰⁸ In a letter to Mackenzie he wrote: "I told them that I had spent several years in these Free States--that every day's residence made me admire more and more their elective Institutions--that Canada would, sooner or later, enjoy the blessings of Self government, and that if I took charge of their paper it would be to tell their governor these truths and to urge the necessity of conceding Elective Institutions to their Country also." E.B. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 30 April 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. And he referred to the matter in a letter to Papineau in April: "I have received during this season, since the 1st. January a number of letters from my Countrymen in Quebec urging me to return there, and take charge of a liberal newspaper which they were about establishing, I declined repeatedly--but they seemed not satisfied--so they had a Meeting of several of the principal people among them who passed Resolutions and voted me a very handsome letter soliciting my return. All the proceedings had the sanction of the Revd. McMahon who, you recollect, was, in our time, a hot Tory. In return I sent a long letter thanking them for this kind preference which I considered an approval of my past political conduct....I reminded them of the treachery and tyranny with which the British brought about the Union between England & Ireland & told them that if they look back and reflect, they would find that the same infernal policy & means were used to accomplish the Union between the two Canadas--and as Ireland and Canada were alike in suffering, so I hope they would love the one with the same fidelity that they Cherished the other. I, however, declined their invitation at present, which I said I regretted to be obliged to do, as if I had the control of their Newspaper it would give me an opportunity of telling their British Governor that Canada would be blessed, sooner or later, despite all that might be done, with Self government--that I had lived now nearly seven years under purely Elective Institutions, that I had seen peace, prosperity and protection for the people under them, and that I should insist on Elective Institutions also for Canada, were I to have control of their press--which however circumstances beyond my Control would now prevent me from accepting I concluding [sic] by urging them to purge their city of its present Tory Representatives--(meaning Black & Nelson). How Mr. McMahon has relished my reply I now [sic] not. But certainly I did not hesitate to support fully all the views and principles I have ever maintained in my palmiest days." O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 29 April 1844, Papineau Papers, ANQ.

wronged, yet patient and enduring Many.¹⁰⁹ He noted that Bagot's tenure of office in Canada had allowed "a gleam of sunshine" to penetrate "the clouds which so long darkened the horizon." But he feared the country was once again in the grasp of "that Faction which has already caused so much woe."¹¹⁰

He would have felt uncomfortable in the new, united Canada, and he had found for himself new friends and a new passion in the United States: history. It was to the past that he now turned for inspiration and insight. He would not reach out to a land that had rejected him unless, perhaps, it seemed willing to accept his ideas, which it never did. The United States he found congenial--here the battle for freedom had apparently been won: at last he felt himself free of the yoke of British tyranny which had enveloped him in Ireland and in Canada. Yet the temptation to return would remain with him for many more years--perhaps always.

¹⁰⁹ O'Callaghan to John Daly, 30 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

¹¹⁰ O'Callaghan to John Daly, 30 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

CHAPTER IX

OBSERVER

1844-1850

There was a time that I longed to return to Canada, but now I do not perceive what use it would be for me to go back. New men, new measures have arisen. The leaders are chuck full of Loyalty on their lips and something else in their hearts. I feel that I would make a poor Loyalist, even in professing lip Loyalty, and were I to return, I would be "like a cat in a strange garret," so I do not anticipate any prospect of seeing Canada very soon.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1844¹

Canada had changed a great deal between 1837 and 1844. With its two halves now united in a firm if loveless embrace, the Lower province where O'Callaghan had come to prominence in such a short period of time was now being ruled by men who had once been his colleagues--and who now considered him as good as dead. The patriotes were gone--even the name was scarcely heard. As this chapter will indicate, LaFontaine and his "reformers," who had put themselves in a strong position to inherit the influence, if not the policies, of Papineau and his party, would be challenged during these years first by Denis-Benjamin Viger and eventually by Louis-Joseph Papineau himself. The challenge would involve the acceptance of the Union, of a Canada which would include French Canadians soon as a minority, and which would be forced by the end of British imperial tariff preference to seek new markets and a new economic strategy.

¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3996.

O'Callaghan by 1844 was no longer a young man--nor was he a happy one. He had never been able to re-establish himself successfully in the United States in either of his professions--medicine or journalism--despite his best efforts. His Irish Catholicism made him less attractive, he felt, to many Americans as either doctor or editor. He wrote to Mackenzie that "out here I am lost!" for there were too many better applicants for positions: "Sparta hath many an abler citizen than I." He also had other disadvantages: "I am not acquainted with any leading politicians to whom I could speak as freely as I speak to you--and my habits and disposition are rather retiring than obtrusive. I have the shyness of the stag; I give fight only when I am at bay."² There must have seemed at times little reason to stay--although married now to an American, his young daughter had recently died just "when she arrived at an age that she knew us and we loved her the more." This, he wrote later, "was the hardest blow."³

Yet he found the political climate in the United States far more to his liking than that in Canada. He still believed in all the principles of the patriote movement--and, much as he had found the Canadian government tyrannical when he arrived, at least there was then a party which he believed was dedicated to true reform. Now he was not confident that even that was true. He feared that most of the old patriotes were more interested in patronage than principle, and that they would serve the British in return for the perquisites of power.

² O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 22 December 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

³ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 77.

This chapter will follow O'Callaghan as he finally established a new career for himself in the United States--not as a doctor nor a journalist, but as the state archivist of New York. It will concentrate though not on his American activity, but on his views of events to the north and his comments on the politicians who were now in power there. Papineau's return to Canada and his election to the Legislative Assembly of the United Canadas would revive O'Callaghan's hopes, but they would soon be dashed again. Although he remained loyal to his old leader, he soon realized that he had little support and that he would not advocate the radical policies which O'Callaghan believed could attract the popular support which he required to effect any real change.

In Canada Sir Charles Metcalfe found himself almost immediately at loggerheads with his ministers over the issue of the control of patronage. To LaFontaine and Baldwin this was part and parcel of ministerial responsibility--to Metcalfe government appointments were still a royal prerogative. On 25 November 1843, then, all the ministers but one resigned.⁴ Metcalfe had no trouble finding English-speaking replacements, but he needed some prominent French Canadian in his government. He turned to D.-B. Viger, who was less than enamoured of LaFontaine and his preoccupation with responsible government. The old patriote agreed to serve, and brought with him Papineau's brother Denis-Benjamin. They both hoped that their old leader would soon be reunited with them in government.⁵

It is ironic but understandable that expectations of Papineau's

⁴ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 131-44; Nish, pp. 66-67. Dominick Daly was the lone dissenter.

⁵ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 144-48.

return to government had been prompted by the coming to power at different times of two of his old allies who were now bitter enemies, and it reflects accurately the confused state of politics in Canada East, where the patriotes had failed to reunite after the debacle of 1837. O'Callaghan originally felt great confidence in Viger, and thought "a new Era was opening under his guidance, for Canada."⁶ He had hoped, however, that Papineau would return to make sure a new course was firmly set. Papineau did not agree, and was annoyed at O'Callaghan's attitude. The doctor had soon changed his mind and he assured Papineau that "the charm was dispelled" even before he had received his old leader's opinion on the matter.⁷

O'Callaghan was convinced that only fully elective institutions like those of the United States--and republican status--would suffice to heal Canada's malaise and he was appalled that reformers like LaFontaine and George-Etienne Cartier accepted that "all the grievances contained in the Ninety-two Resolutions, and complained of by Mr. Papineau, have been redressed, that all Canada requires is responsible government, and liberal Ministers. That's all!"⁸ Only Wolfred Nelson and Jean-Joseph Girouard remained true, he felt, and the Upper Canadians were "so full of the 'Responsible government' principle" that their conversion seemed hopeless.⁹ He was also distressed that some old patriotes now sided

⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 29 April 1844, Papineau Papers, ANQ.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3996.

⁹ Ibid.

with Viger, whose position the doctor considered unacceptable. Still, he was comforted "that the Mass of the Irish and the Canadians are staunch and sound at heart."¹⁰ LaFontaine, moreover, was "not popular. His manner and bearing are repulsive, and there are various traits in his political life which deprive him of much of that public confidence and esteem which he should otherwise enjoy."¹¹

Some other exiles were also disillusioned by the goings on in Canada. T.S. Brown was disappointed that Bagot's withdrawal had apparently reversed his acceptance of responsible government: "Canada...after having enjoyed a gleam of sunshine, with government of the lamented Bagot, is thrown back into the vortex of suffering from which she had just recovered."¹² He believed the old tyrannical faction and the "system of Irresponsibility and Misgovernment" had been re-established.¹³ Mackenzie thought Papineau and O'Callaghan were, under the circum-

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 3993. O'Callaghan had earlier wavered in his opinion of Viger, as he wrote to Papineau: "I was sorry that my last letter caused you any 'mauvaise humeur'. You ought to know me too well to believe that I would say any thing that I might imagine would give you pain. I will not conceal from you that my confidence in M. Viger was strong, and I did fancy that a new Era was opening, under his guidance, for Canada, which your presence might have rendered permanent. But long before I rec'd your letter the charm was dispelled--and if it were not, sufficient has since occurred to take the scales from my eyes: O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 29 April 1844, Papineau Papers, ANQ.

¹¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3994.

¹² T.S. Brown to O'Callaghan, 29 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

¹³ Ibid. As for T.S. Brown he had returned to Montreal but "has very much fallen in character in consequence of his strong habits of Intemperance. He is often drunk, and that not secretly! This is much to be regretted. It will not, however, astonish you, after what we saw of him at St. Charles." O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3995.

stances, wise to remain in exile--he himself was still forbidden to return.¹⁴ Papineau was discouraged--he believed the British were determined to control the politics of the Canadas--and all their colonies--by one means or another. Under the Union they were quite willing to adopt "responsible government"--as long as the men popular with the people who formed the government were content to be their pawns. And this was what too many were willing to accept, oblivious of the fact that "la politique oppressive de l'Angleterre contre les libertés des colons de toutes races et de toutes castes est inflexible."¹⁵

O'Callaghan still felt deeply not only about Canada, but also about Ireland. He had always given his motherland a good deal of attention in the Vindicator, and it still concerned him. Moreover, Ireland was fast approaching a political, economic and social crisis which would change it utterly. The island was beset by the early 1840's with ever worsening economic and social problems. Shackled by its ties to the British economy, Irish trade and manufactures were declining, while the population, much of it all but landless and dependent for survival on the potato, continued to grow at an alarming rate.¹⁶

O'Connell, meanwhile, had founded the Loyal National Repeal Association in 1840, after the failure of his alliance with the Whigs in the British Parliament, and had agitated vociferously for the repeal of the Union ever since, concentrating in particular on the holding of

¹⁴ W.L. Mackenzie, to O'Callaghan, 1 May 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

¹⁵ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 15 June 1844, *ibid.*

¹⁶ See Gearoid O. Tuathaigh, Ireland before the Famine, 1798-1848 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972), pp. 117-156.

"monster" meetings around the island to stir up support and intimidate the government. The British Conservatives under Robert Peel finally decided to call O'Connell's bluff--as had the British authorities when faced by the patriote agitation of 1837 in Lower Canada. Once again the reformers were faced with the alternatives of hopeless rebellion or surrender. O'Connell, forbidden to hold a meeting at Clontarf in 1843, and faced with armed force, cancelled the gathering. Arrested and charged with conspiracy, he was convicted, but subsequently released.¹⁷

The repeal movement in Ireland spawned similar associations in the United States, and O'Callaghan was the president of the Young Men's Repeal Association in Albany.¹⁸ He once shared its platform with Thomas D'Arcy McGee, who would much later fill O'Callaghan's old rôle as leader of the Irish Catholics of Montreal.¹⁹ The doctor was convinced of the similarities between recent events in Lower Canada and those in Ireland forty years earlier:

...we have only to go a little back and we shall find a portion of the People, in each, designedly forced, by a deceitful and deceiving Government, into armed resistance in order that a shallow pretext may be afforded to suspend the Constitution--to proclaim Martial Law--and to establish an unholy Union ere the People could recover from the conster-

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 184-190. Mackenzie wrote to O'Callaghan about this: "Now they have caged O'Connell. How strange his fate! Offered \$25,000 a year for life, and high judicial powers...he nobly refused it--stands for his country--and when a little older and, of course, wiser, the same Br. govt. that had tendered the \$25,000 a year, convert their bribe into an accusation, a false jury...and Bridwell, with security reqd. for good behavior as if he were a bad citizen!": W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 25 June 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

¹⁸ Guy, p. 35.

¹⁹ Robin B. Burns, "Thomas D'Arcy McGee: A Biography" (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1976), p. 43.

nation into which they were purposely thrown by Courts Martial, Military Executions, hangings, burnings, and every sort of devastation and oppression.²⁰

Lord Stanley he saw as the chief culprit, a "Scorpion" who had done his best to enslave both Ireland and Canada.

Those writing to O'Callaghan at the time were also very concerned by the state of Irish affairs. T.S. Brown wrote that "Ireland is still staggering under misgovernment. Yet the studied pictures of her half-famished millions, anxiously looking for the day of deliverance from their social and political helotism, seems to strike terror into the soul even of the Iron Duke who does not send her Liberator to Jail, though backed with over twenty thousand bayonets."²¹ And Patrick Cassidy of New York wrote that he hoped O'Callaghan would not move to Montreal as this would "contract your sphere of usefulness on behalf of poor Ireland."²² He admired O'Callaghan's desire for an independent Ireland--the doctor had written an article on the subject--but despaired of the prospect: "her destiny is, I fear, to be united either by the golden or the iron chain."²³ Moreover, unlike O'Callaghan, he believed that the Irish nation was unsuited to republicanism because of "its innate veneration & respect for antiquity, & rank, its unextinguishable admiration for pomp & pageantry, & its absolute incapacity for subor-

²⁰ O'Callaghan to John Daly, 30 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

²¹ T.S. Brown to O'Callaghan, 29 March 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

²² Patrick S. Cassidy, New York, to O'Callaghan, 23 May 1844, *ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

dination when freed from all pressure from the ranks above."²⁴

O'Callaghan believed Ireland should be a republic--he wrote to Mackenzie asking "what affection should we have for England, that we should labor to bind Ireland...even by the golden link of the crown," to which the irascible Scot answered:

'Affection' did you say? 'Affection'! for cruel remorseless England that robbed us & butchered us & drove in exile all over the world! Oh no,--'affection' for England we can never entertain. We may forgive past atrocities, on obtaining our Legislative Independence; but we can never love her. It is from dire necessity alone, that we are compelled to admit the connection of the Crown: for we cannot otherwise choose. We must retain that, or fall into anarchy.²⁵

One suspects that O'Callaghan was perfectly willing to take the risk.

This period saw the rise in the United States of nativism, with its violent bias against immigrants, especially Irish and Catholic ones. As early as 1842 O'Callaghan had been concerned by attempts to deny public funding to Catholic schools in New York state. He had been appalled that, as he saw it, prejudice led some Americans to deny Catholics "some of our rights as Citizens."²⁶ He was suspicious of the supposedly tolerant Democrats, for he believed "they are friends of the adopted Citizens only, when they can make their friendship subserve their poli-

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 1 June 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

²⁶ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 15 June 1842, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS. 616.

tical purposes."²⁷ Tension between "natives" and more recent arrivals of a different culture and religion finally exploded during the summer of 1844 in Philadelphia and resulted in severe rioting in early May, and again in July, which left forty-five people dead and 145 injured.²⁸ These riots upset Papineau, both in themselves and because of the bad impression of the United States that they would inevitably give many Canadians.²⁹

Orangeism, meanwhile, was apparently gaining ground in Canada, for O'Callaghan wrote to Papineau during the summer of 1844:

Orangeism is in full blast in Montreal....Some days since Govr. Metcalfe was invited to lay the foundation stone of an Episcopal church in Griffintown. On his arrival on the ground, lo! an orange flag was hoisted, and orange lilies decorated the prominent places all around. This irritated the Catholic workmen employed at the building, who pulled the flag down, and trampled the orange lilies. A row ensued. The ladies present got frightened--rushed to the scaffolding for safety--this fell with the weight. One had her arm broken, another her leg & this last has since died. On the 12th inst., the Anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, the Orangemen met and dined together, singing offensive songs and playing offensive tunes. A mob gathered and did considerable damage to the houses

²⁷ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 29 June 1844, *ibid.*

²⁸ Robert Francis Hueston, The Catholic Press and Nativism 1840-1860 (New York: Arno Press, 1976), pp. 74-80.

²⁹ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 15 June 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1. Another correspondent, Patrick Brennan, the superintendant of the Montreal Emigrant Office and an old friend of O'Callaghan's, was also appalled and hoped that Irish Catholics in the United States would "be better protected in future from the Savage hands of the native Americans but sometimes I think that the Orange are aiding and assisting." Patrick Brennan to O'Callaghan, 9 August 1844, *ibid.*, and PAC, MG24-B50, 2: 1-2.

in which they assembled.³⁰

Mackenzie was aware of a similar situation in Toronto: "You will see that Toronto goes Orange--that is, it goes 'native'...& were the Canadas entirely cut adrift from Engld. you & I would find nativeism [sic], orangeism, & Wesleyism troublesome there, altho [sic] there is no lack of Canad'n Caths."³¹ And at the start of the new year Mackenzie informed the doctor: "The awfu] scenes betn. the Orangemen & caths [sic] in Montl. are a result of the British colonl. policy--the details are really horrid."³²

Mackenzie, meanwhile, had become suspicious that Papineau was in London to make his peace with the British government, and that he would soon return to Canada where he and Viger would help the British base their power in Canada on the French Canadians.³³ O'Callaghan rose immediately to the defense of his old leader, telling Mackenzie to stop suspecting old friends "whom you have known under every phase of fortune, good, bad and indifferent, and who have every good opinion of, and confidence in you."³⁴ He also denied that he had met with LaFontaine and A.-N. Morin, for the former "is not the man to remember you nor me."

³⁰ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 17 July 1844, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 3998.

³¹ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 28 October 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

³² W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan (postmarked 2 January 1845), O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

³³ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 24 August 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1. Mackenzie was upset with O'Callaghan for not writing to him: "Are you speechless--dead--out of humour--or what's the matter?"

³⁴ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 27 August 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

You and the like of us made him what he was.³⁵ But Mackenzie was obviously not content--he was particularly upset because a general amnesty had not been granted--and O'Callaghan agreed with him that it should have been a "sine qua non" for LaFontaine and Baldwin to have entered the government.³⁶ But, it was scarcely surprising--they had taken power to get control of patronage, wrote O'Callaghan, and while in office they had not passed "one measure into a law to extend, or to render more secure the liberties of the people."³⁷ He had, however, little good to say of politicians in general: "they are a genus by themselves....They have all the bad qualities, and few of the good ones, that distinguish the human race."³⁸ As for O'Callaghan, he paid little attention to politics--or so he wrote Mackenzie: "Every day finds me farther and farther within my Shell, like the snail in hazy weather."³⁹

Papineau wrote to O'Callaghan shortly after, complaining of Mackenzie's unjust suspicions and absurd tales. He believed this trait in Mackenzie, of too easily believing the worst about his colleagues, had lost him many friends and diminished his chances of success in the cause of liberty. Nonetheless, "il a beaucoup souffert pour une bonne cause.. Je l'aime pour cela et supporterai bien une grande injustice de sa part plutôt que de lui en faire souffrir la plus légère de la

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

mienne."⁴⁰ As for the Canadian situation, Papineau was confused by Metcalfe's apparently contradictory activities--accepting responsible government in principle but doing nothing about it in fact--and was disturbed by the number of his old friends who were supporting Viger: "je ne saurais lutter contre de tels amis et aimerais mieux que le pays perdît."⁴¹

All the exiles were obviously bitter, but none more so than Mackenzie, whose salary at the Custom House in New York was a mere \$700 a year for five hours' work per day. He was, nevertheless, glad to get even that. But his anger over past events, and his rage at present injustices, was not to be easily mollified, as he wrote to O'Callaghan.

What you say of Mr. Papineau and his friends I have read over and over again very attentively. When your troubles began on the 6th of Novr. 1837 we were in quietness in Toronto. When we moved 5th. Decr. the game was up with you, and the history of your failures spread thro' U.C. in the gazettes. I had pledged myself that no change of circumstances would make me untrue to you, and faithfully and at the greatest of risques [sic] did I redeem that pledge. What do I now see? Viger, who knew--who must have known, everything, managing Metcalfe. Papineau's right-hand man for 30 years, premier--Papineau's family well off--his eldest son Citizen Papineau slipping over to Montreal to enjoy \$6000 a year of a sinecure--his brother Dennis [sic] Benjamin Papineau enjoying \$6000 more, and enough of patronage, conferred thro' Dennis [sic] Benjamin Viger--Papineau himself forgiven--his property undisturbed, while mine, and it was extensive, was scattered, stolen, sold, plundered--he ready to appear here or in Canada--to act a patriotic part, like O'Connell, taking no office except thro' his connexions...but I need not go farther--myself

⁴⁰ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 15 September or October 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

treated as if I was an old dog.⁴²

Mackenzie was convinced, though, that England would not waste its patronage, although Papineau, "O'Connell like, may seek to preserve popularity for himself by keeping aloof from power, while his connexions fatten at the public crib."⁴³ It galled him that, although he had buried five children in Canada, he could not return, and that he was treated poorly even in the United States, where he was a citizen!

He believed that Papineau and Viger were both "infinitely" LaFontaine's "superiors in experience and political tact and talent," but that Papineau had erred badly in 1837:

Papineau, when he alarmed England in 1837, by his orations, meetings, threatenings, & c., should have been prepared for the results he brot abt.; it would have been wiser to arm the people quietly, and not induce Engld. to expend \$500,000 in the fall in preparations, than to parade and drill the people above and below Montreal. If you want to hit a powerful enemy is it wise to warn him to be prepared to defeat your object? Did not Papineau do this?--And now we see his friends and family monopolizing the patronage of Canada under absolutism while those who were ruined in their efforts to sustain him are struggling in exile, proscribed in Europe and in Canada! You tell me I'm suspicious, Doctor. I'm more than suspicious--I was Scotch--had the ear of the govt. in Engld. far better than Mr. Viger, when we were both there--could have played a selfish card had I been selfish--did not do so. Came to Quebec to try to help you--and in 16 days was never once asked to enter the house of a Canadian--that did not change me--offers of place--threatenings of trouble --even your defeat, left me faithful to a cause I thot. a good one. What do I now see? What have I not seen during the last seven years?⁴⁴

⁴² W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 16 September 1844, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1, and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

It is a fierce indictment and some of its points are irrefutable. Certainly Papineau had erred badly in 1837, when he had led his forces, dream-like, into defeat and disgrace. Whether, as Mackenzie suspected, he had betrayed them purposefully seems unlikely, but his responsibility was nonetheless clear.

Mackenzie did pay a heavier price for his actions than did the aristocratic Papineau, as well as most of the other patriote leaders, although of course many common people had died in the cause. And it is evident that a good deal of compromising of principles had occurred in the years since the rebellion. Here Mackenzie was more vindictive, or astute, than O'Callaghan. He accused the Canadien party to which the doctor remained attached of a "deceitful career": "They provide devilish liberally for their households at the expense of principles which they put on and off like their breeches. Have I forgotten who and what Viger, Papineau & Co were? Am I blind to the new coalition? Who could be? Are \$5000 salaries found accidentally by rebels and rebels' sons--by old democrats, arm in arm with old Tories, in the streets of Montreal? Is Santa-Claus a reality?"⁴⁵ No, there was no doubt in Mackenzie's mind of the perfidy surrounding him. He concluded:

You assume the garb of the demure Scotchman, and place me in the choleric Irishman's shoes,...But be assured, Doctor, even a believer in John Knox can hardly swallow the tale, that England bestows such gifts as the Papineaus and Vigers are sharing, without a quid pro quo. Papineau, Draper, Morris & Viger, governing [sic] in Canada and me here, under attaint, is indeed a good joke.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

A few months later he was told that his name would never be included "in any Canad." amnesty if those in authority now can hinder it." It was just as he suspected, and he commented bitterly: "It does not seem altogether fair this separate bargain of the Papineau and Viger families."⁴⁷ But he was not without hope. He dismissed O'Callaghan's avowed aversion to politics, telling him bluntly that "nature created you a politician." He considered that the "Yankee purity" they had unexpectedly experienced in the United States had soured him, but "you and me may have a field for the display of the experience of the past. I'm hale and sound as at 30--and you'll not be as old as Viger for 30 y'rs to come. We'll bide our time."⁴⁸ Mackenzie's dreams would never materialize, and he would remain obsessed with the failure of the rebellion, and its sorry aftermath. Despite his more balanced approach, O'Callaghan was also a bitter man, and with good reason. Unlike Papineau, the Canadian authorities felt no need to coddle him into submission. But in the end his was probably the happier fate, as he was never forced to play the part of the king who once was.

It seems clear that Papineau was at least as upset by Viger's actions as by LaFontaine's. Mackenzie was oblivious to this--he remained convinced that Papineau had made his peace with the British and was about to join the government. O'Callaghan advised him frequently to be more charitable:

⁴⁷ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 3 April 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

The course pursued by Messers Viger and D.B. Papineau may not tally with your or my notion of what should be the right one. But yet it may not be the less patriotic because it does not harmonize with our views. I have great confidence in M. Viger's love of Canada. I know D.B. Papineau personally, and a purer, more single-minded and honorable man does not live. I believe these gentlemen have rallied around Gov. Metcalfe for two reasons principally: 1st to prevent the government and its measures being conducted by Moffatt and the more violent and anti-Canadian portion of the Tory party of Montreal...2ndly. The political institutions of Lower Canada are in an absolute State of Chaos. The people are nothing.⁴⁹

There was, O'Callaghan pointed out, no town or county organizations such as existed in Upper Canada, no Jury Law, and the schools were in ruin. Thus expediency explained Viger's course.

In Montreal, meanwhile, a new attempt was being made to secure an alliance of French Canadians and Irish, this time in the cause of moderate reform. Early in 1844 a by-election was called in the west ward of Montreal. LaFontaine was evidently convinced of the need for support among the Irish of the city, and the Irish Catholic Lewis Drummond, who had acted as defense lawyer for many patriote prisoners, was chosen as the reform candidate. The Tories had nominated William Molson, and Viger had little choice but to tacitly support his candidacy--although he refused to speak publicly on his behalf. The Irish Protestant Francis Hincks moved from Upper Canada to bolster the reform effort to woo Irish votes, and soon established the Pilot and Commercial Advertiser as his organ of propaganda. Once the polls opened, Drummond's

⁴⁹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 12 November 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, A0, MS 516.

organization swept all before it, and he was elected by a margin of three to one.⁵⁰ But violence had marred the election, with the Irish canal workers far too strong for Molson's bullies.⁵¹ Faced with defeat, Molson had withdrawn, but the troops called out to guard the polls had been ordered by an inexperienced magistrate to fire on an unruly crowd. O'Callaghan, while pleased with Drummond's victory, was appalled at the violence, which he compared unfavorably with his experience of polling in the United States and which he blamed on British tyranny.⁵²

Viger realized that he needed to strengthen his position in Canada East, and in the fall Metcalfe called a general election. But most of the old patriotes were now siding with LaFontaine. Wolfred Nelson, in fact, ran against Viger himself in Richelieu, and defeated him.⁵³ John Neilson also went down to defeat in Quebec City. But in Montreal the defection of some of the Irish canal workers helped doom the reformers Drummond and Pierre Beaulieu to defeat.⁵⁴ Overall, the

⁵⁰ The vote total was 1,383 for Drummond, 478 for Molson. The former had won the French-Canadian vote by 984 to 15, while Molson had won among the English-speaking by only 463 to 399: The Pilot, April 1844, cited in Patricia Brown Peter, "A Question of Loyalty and Self-Interest: Irish Montrealers and the Struggle for Responsible Government in Canada 1840 to 1848" (M.A. thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, 1981), p. 67.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 22-28; Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 169-178.

⁵² O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 19 April 1844, Papineau Papers, ANQ.

⁵³ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 191.

⁵⁴ Drummond polled 963 votes; Beaulieu 952; their opponents George Moffatt and C.-C. de Bleury garnered 1,079 and 1,075 respectively: The Pilot, 4 November 1844, cited in Peter, p. 67. Many canal workers who had supported Drummond in the by-election had been fined by the government, and Molson had dismissed all the workers at his brewery who had voted against him: Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 177.

reformers had won in Canada East, but the Tories had carried Canada West.⁵⁵ The crisis of government which had developed since the Union would continue.

O'Callaghan was pleased by the reform victory.⁵⁶ Papineau, though, remained aloof, dissatisfied with the policies of both Viger and LaFontaine.⁵⁷ As for the Irish of Montreal, their allegiance to the reformers was still to be firmly secured--but they did support the reform candidates in the municipal election soon after. Yet it was often a difficult choice--the appeal of moderate reform pitted against Tory promises of employment.⁵⁸ And Papineau would shortly enter the fray with his demand for repeal of the Unions in both Canada and Ireland.

By this time O'Callaghan's earlier respect for Van Buren had greatly dissipated and he wrote to Mackenzie that he was "longing to witness the sordid rascal's defeat."⁵⁹ O'Callaghan was sickened by "all he has done to us" and "his British predilections."⁶⁰ He was intending to support the Whig Henry Clay for president in the impending election. But he was disappointed when the Democrats chose James Polk over Van Buren as their presidential candidate for it split the New York Democratic party and represented a victory for those who wanted to annex

⁵⁵ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 178-192; Peter, p. 29.

⁵⁶ See O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 27 August 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁵⁷ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 181-82.

⁵⁸ Peter, p. 29.

⁵⁹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 3 May 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Texas. O'Callaghan wrote to Mackenzie that he could not "as yet digest that intended robbery on a great scale, and I fear if we shall go along after this manner violating public morality--'coveting our neighbors goods', we or our posterity will have to pay for it."⁶¹ He felt the situation was akin to the expansionism of Napoleonic France:

Americans have assisted a lot of Yankee speculators to wrest Texas from Mexico, and to plant the standard of 'liberty' there. Now, Bonaparte like, we incorporate the independent province into the Empire--we 'annex'! Carry out these principles, and where are they to terminate? At Cape Horn and the North Pole, taking in (en passant) Cuba and the West India Islands--And all, may I ask for what? To maintain 'our peculiar institutions'! Was it for this that the Republic was first founded.⁶²

This all sounds somewhat ironic from someone who had once been involved with plots to have Canada invaded by Americans, and who would soon support its annexation.⁶³

His feelings, though, seem to have been influenced by the fact that the acquisition of Texas strengthened the pro-slavery forces in the United States. Thus, the "peculiar institution" he was most concerned with was not Congress or elective local government officials, but slavery which was now "an institution for which we shall have to go to"

⁶¹ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 4 June 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ O'Callaghan was himself becoming more of an American nationalist. He wrote to Amédée Papineau in June of 1845 that he doubted there would be a war over Texas as Mexico was too weak to do anything but threaten, and as for England, "She may intrigue, but that's all. Canada is too near the grasp of the United States, for England to be in a hurry to have that Province Annexed too." O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 26 June 1845, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4105.

war and break every one of the ten commandments."⁶⁴ It was clearly the slavery issue that was driving O'Callaghan into the arms of the Whigs, who were on many issues more conservative than the Democrats.

But by the fall of 1844 O'Callaghan had had a change of heart, for he had realized that the Whigs were in league with the nativists. He had consequently been catapulted into the campaign, and had addressed a crowd at Democratic Headquarters in New York City, where he had warned that nativism would produce two grades of citizen--one of them a "Master Class." He had then agreed to address other Democratic meetings around the state, especially where there was a population of Canadians, but had refused all remuneration. Polk won the election and O'Callaghan gloated that the Whigs in New York had been "knocked into Smithereens."⁶⁵

Early in 1845 Mackenzie wrote to O'Callaghan that he was upset with the Pope for following up his order to "the Poles to submit to their Russian lords, and not to dare resist established authority, by ordering the Irish Catholic prelates to leave all political business to the lds. spiritual in parlt. assembled."⁶⁶ The doctor tried to reassure him that "obedience to the Pope, personally, on temporal matters, is not an article of the Catholic creed....He will find the Catholic Bishops & Clergy of Ireland have rights as well as the British govern-

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 4 June 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶⁵ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 12 November 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. But he complained that very anti-Catholic articles were appearing in some Whig newspapers, and that "it is now said openly that it was the Pope that defeated Clay!"

⁶⁶ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 19 February 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 1.

ment, and unless Justice for Ireland be conceded, agitation will not cease."⁶⁷ One can only doubt that this reassurance was sufficient to calm Mackenzie.

O'Callaghan was not oblivious to the faults of the Catholic Church, but he was a religious man. In April he wrote a letter to Mackenzie which set forth his views on American politics in the customary terms of a committed abolitionist who was also a liberal Democrat:

Nativism wishes to restrict the right of suffrage for the white man--abolitionism to enlarge it for the black. Whiggery professes friendship for the Mass, in order to be able to secure greater wealth & privilege for the few.⁶⁸

His Catholicism, and his view of himself as a Christian, greatly influenced his views on social and political issues. Thus he combined the idealism of Christianity with its essential acceptance of man's imperfection. He accepted that "perhaps it is...an Essential law of Providence that political corruption and trickery must exist to a certain amount among us."⁶⁹ Ultimately, though, the solution lay in the improvement of the people themselves: "Religious influences must be brought more to bear on them. They must be taught to avoid evil and shrink from it, though offering present wealth & future honor, and to have virtue."⁷⁰ Unfortunately, he admitted, "at present, there is more

⁶⁷ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 15 January 1845, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516, p. 5773. This letter's tentative dating at the archives is, I believe, incorrect, since it seems to be in answer to O'Callaghan's letter of 19 February 1845.

⁶⁸ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 25 April 1845, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

open bribery and foul corruption at the polls than I should like to have any thing to do with."⁷¹ Mackenzie agreed with the analysis, but not the conclusion: he denied wholeheartedly that religious influences could benefit "the morals and manners of mankind."⁷²

O'Callaghan was becoming more and more absorbed by historical matters. The first volume of his History of the New Netherlands was about to be published, and O'Callaghan reported that it was there "looked for with impatience."⁷³ But he was concerned that many documents which he had come across in the archives at Albany relating to the history of Canada were unavailable in the colony. He wrote to E.-R. Fabre and to Amédée Papineau on the subject, urging the latter to bring it to the attention of D.-B. Viger and D.-B. Papineau: "possibly they may see the propriety of not allowing Canadians to be sending to New York to learn what happened in their Country one hundred years ago or less."⁷⁴

Probably as a result of his campaigning for the Democrats in 1844 O'Callaghan was asked at this time, with the approval of Bishop John Hughes of New York, to edit the Freeman's Journal of that city which had

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 15 May 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 2.

⁷³ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 1 August 1845, *ibid.*, p. 4124. See also Monet, "O'Callaghan," p. 555.

⁷⁴ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 26 June 1845, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4104-5. See also O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 1 August 1845, *ibid.*, 3: 4122.

been established in 1840 and acquired two years later by the Bishop.⁷⁵ This journal was a powerful foe of nativism.⁷⁶ O'Callaghan wrote that it was the defender of "the rights of the Catholic population spread over this vast Republic."⁷⁷ But the budding archivist was unwilling to accept the financial terms offered which "would not be doing justice to my own character, nor to those vast interests, which in my new Capacity, would be committed to my charge."⁷⁸ Like Mackenzie, O'Callaghan had become quite obsessed with making a decent living for himself and his family, perhaps only too aware after the events of 1837 of the effects of poverty and insecurity. But he did contribute several articles dealing with historical and medical subjects to the journal over the next few years.⁷⁹

Viger's government pardoned all the remaining exiles early in

⁷⁵ Apollinaris W. Baumgartner, Catholic Journalism: A Study of its Development in the United States, 1789-1930 (n.p.: 1931; reprint ed., New York: AMS Press, 1967), pp. 28-30. Since O'Callaghan was not, at this point, acquainted with the Bishop, he did not believe Mackenzie when he reported that the doctor would be offered the position: O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 4 June 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁷⁶ Baumgartner, pp. 28-30.

⁷⁷ O'Callaghan to Messrs. Ende and Walsh, 4 August 1845 (copy), O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 2.

⁷⁸ Ibid. He had been offered first \$600, then \$780 a year. Moreover he wrote to Mackenzie: "I am not disposed to embark in the career of Editor, even if I were invited." O'Callaghan to Mackenzie, 4 June 1844, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁷⁹ Guy, p. 30.

1845, with the exception of Mackenzie and Robert Nelson.⁸⁰ They began returning home during the spring. O'Callaghan's old colleague Thomas Storrow Brown wrote to O'Callaghan in the fall of 1845 that he had been cordially received by all his old opponents. He believed this was because of the respect given those "who have withstood authority on proper grounds." He continued: "Lord Durham wondered why the people had not revolted before and Lord Sydenham said that he would himself have been a rebel and consequently it has become rather fashionable to consider us very clever people who got a true insight into the condition of the country before other folks got awake."⁸¹ But there lay an even deeper motive: prosperity, which many considered a consequence of the revolt: "the Country has been advanced and enriched exceedingly by the revolt-- Montreal half a century: everything now centred here and the British have...been the greatest gainers."⁸² He believed that Papineau, when he returned to Canada, would do best to remain aloof from "the paltry wrangling of our present division of parties," for

⁸⁰ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 10 February 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 2. See also Monet, p. 202. Almost forty arrived in January of 1845 alone.

⁸¹ T.S. Brown to O'Callaghan, 9 October 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 2.

⁸² Ibid. He continued: "Montreal is becoming a great rich beautiful place. Come and see and feel proud over your heady work. Nearly all thank the revolt as the causes [sic] and the rebels as the causers. If any says that Lord Sydenham may be thanked I answer frankly (without disputing the point) 'but you would never have seen Lord Sydenham had there been no revolters no no you would have had nothing but your goaty drunken old Governor and he still thinking you were getting on fast if you could approach a Jackass'es [sic] gallop.'" Brown had himself had enough of "the patriot line for the present and shall attend to my own affairs while those to whom the advantages have fallen break their heads about the spoils."

When our hand was in we had really a 'grande question' to which the present agitation appears weary stale flat and unprofitable. By maintaining himself as the embodiment [sic] of the movement principle Mr. P. would be great here especially with those of English origin but an alliance with any of the Ministères ins or outs would shelve him forever in the company of Viger--and the other discarded patriarchs who in reality stand lower with their new friends than with their old associates--if possible.⁸³

Papineau returned to Canada in September and was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd in Montreal on 9 October.⁸⁴ He acted much as Brown had advised, for he was unwilling to support his brother Denis-Benjamin, and his cousin D.-B. Viger, whose course he believed misguided: he could not countenance their collaboration with the colonial regime. On the other hand, while he supported LaFontaine's demands, he did so because he hoped they would make Canada more independent of British tutelage. To Papineau, responsible government was one of many changes needed--to LaFontaine, it was the essential reform. Nor was he likely to openly break with his own family.⁸⁵ So he simply remained aloof--he returned to his seigneurie of Petite Nation a hero and largely an anachronism. He wrote to O'Callaghan that "l'état politique du pays me pue au nez plus qu'il n'a jamais fait."⁸⁶ He believed that both LaFontaine and Viger had erred critically in not constantly protesting against the

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 217.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 217-20.

⁸⁶ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 12 May 1846, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 2.

Union.⁸⁷ Fabre also felt that Viger and D.-B. Papineau were in an unenviable position, constantly harassed by LaFontaine: "c'est une misère de les voir," he wrote to O'Callaghan.⁸⁸

In a sense Viger and his supporters, many of them Papineau's old followers, had fallen into a trap and, by accepting power, had lost their freedom of manoeuvre. LaFontaine, on the other hand, may have wanted nothing more than power and patronage, but he wanted them as absolutely as possible. The British would eventually give him much of what he wanted--in return for his acceptance of the system as a whole. This was a compromise which Papineau, at least by 1845, could not accept.

But the problem went even deeper, for both Viger and LaFontaine, in their own ways, were now striving to make the system work, and in that sense neither was advancing the cause of independence, nor undermining the Union. If LaFontaine succeeded, Canada East would have responsible government, but it would have it as a colony, with an appointed Legislative Council, and it would be tied to Canada West with its large English majority and its powerful Tory party. Viger's strategy, on the other hand, seemed to have little chance of achieving anything, for even his proposal of "double majority"--with the executive chosen from the majority in each of the Canadas--would not release Canada East from the

⁸⁷ Ibid. In this letter Papineau refers to an offer which O'Callaghan had received to edit a paper with Father McMahon's approval, and he comments: "Est-il donc converti à vos principes, ou vous croit-il converti au même poste où il vous a suscité d'odieuses persécutions?" This seems to refer to the offer made to O'Callaghan in March of 1844, but perhaps another, similar offer was forthcoming at a later date.

⁸⁸ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 10 February 1845, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 2.

Union. Probably its most attractive characteristic was that it would almost certainly make the system unworkable--but it would also put LaFontaine in power.⁸⁹

Late in 1845 Metcalfe, ravaged by cancer, had to surrender his post and return to England. This was a blow to Viger, but he carried on convinced that his sacrifice was preserving French Canada. He was, though, about to suffer a more serious setback, for the clergy, which had generally supported him, now came to the realization that many of those backing him were far more radical and anti-clerical than they had realized. Finally, goaded beyond endurance by LaFontaine and his supporters in the Assembly and the press, he resigned in June 1846. When Lord Elgin arrived as governor in the winter, he inherited but one executive councillor who was French-Canadian, Denis-Benjamin Papineau, and he did not even have his brother's support. LaFontaine's return to power was evidently approaching.⁹⁰

By the fall of 1846 O'Callaghan was aware of rumours that Canada was to be confederated and the local legislatures abolished as the English authorities considered the Union a failure and had only contempt for "the course pursued by the Legislature in Montreal--their bickerings, quarrels, personalities & c."⁹¹ He had also heard that Mackenzie was to be allowed to return to Canada, which had prompted him to abandon his plan to establish another newspaper there.⁹²

⁸⁹ See Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 202-220.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 224-26, 230-32, 240-255.

⁹¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 28 October 1846, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4182.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 4183.

The old "firebrand" was, however, doomed to remain longer with O'Callaghan in the American republic. And he was once again angry, especially as he suspected O'Callaghan was soon to return. The doctor warned him against bitterness, and assured him that his fears were unfounded. O'Callaghan was obviously hurt that Mackenzie had accused him of turning against his old friends: "I believe my past life ought to protect me from this suspicion, for I am sure I have stuck by old landmarks long and enduringly; until even relatives question the soundness of the head though they doubt not that of the heart."⁹³ But he did not deny that Mackenzie had been treated poorly at times by his old friends in Canada, especially when he was excluded from amnesty. "But," he asked, "are personal grievances to weigh in times like these and in questions in which the fate of Provinces and of millions are to be disposed of?" His answer was clear:

My resolution has been long taken. I will do nothing to embarrass the movements of those with whom I have acted in Canada. I will place no stumbling block in their way, leaving to Providence to decide whether I shall be ever again considered worthy to do duty in my old ranks and with my old compatriots.⁹⁴

Very rarely indeed did he abandon these principles of conduct and of loyalty.

It is perhaps to be expected that a man like O'Callaghan was not without honor in his homelands, new or old, as his sister wrote to him in 1847 that many spoke well of him who knew him in America, or had

⁹³ O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 8 March 1847, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AD, MS 516.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

known him in Ireland.⁹⁵ The first volume of his History of New Netherland was being well received in the United States, and he had resigned from the Albany County Medical Society and had accepted the post of Deputy Muster Clerk at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in order to be better able to consult the family records of old Dutch families resident in New York. His salary of \$600 per annum was, however, insufficient to meet both his personal and scholarly needs. Entreaties on his part to various authorities resulted in the doubling of his salary in May 1847.⁹⁶ He had been elected a member of the New York Historical Society and the Historical Society of Connecticut, but it was not until May 1848 that he managed to secure the new position of state archivist, which allowed him to return to Albany and his friends there, but en-

⁹⁵ Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 27 July 1847, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3.

⁹⁶ Guy, p. 40. See also O'Callaghan to J.A. Dix (U.S. Senator), 28 January 1847, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3, in which he requests his help in getting his salary raised lest he be unable to continue his historical research, since he must care for himself and his "small family." O'Callaghan's Democratic politicking had made him eligible for a government appointment in New York and he needed a good job, for his medical career was not prospering. But he complained to Mackenzie that all the local vacancies of value were filled. He had been advised to consider jobs at the Custom House held by Whigs, but it was not until the fall of 1846, when he was already working on the second volume of his history of the New Netherlands, that the Secretary of the Navy offered him "any appointment in the Navy Yard at Brooklyn, which might be vacant, to enable me to continue my literary pursuits." Six weeks later he wrote that he had refused the position offered at the Navy Yard as it "comported neither with my wishes nor position, and I preferred to struggle on, than to accept what in my opinion ought not to have been offered me." He had, however, subsequently changed his mind. O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 9 January 1845, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516; O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 15 September and 28 October 1846, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4167, 4183. Ironically, O'Callaghan at this time expressed himself appalled at the corruption in American public office: O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 25 April 1845, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

tailed his acceptance of a salary \$400 less than that he was by then receiving at the Navy Yard.⁹⁷

While O'Callaghan was making his way in New York, his Irish countrymen were not doing very well. By 1847 the Irish Famine was entering its third year, and concern among the Irish in North America for their relatives at home was increasing. One of O'Callaghan's friends in Albany, who was sorry to see him move to New York, wrote that "ever since the news of the Irish famine reached American ears the Whigs as a general thing either publicly or privately have given or shown more sympathy than the Democrats."⁹⁸ When a bill was brought before the American Congress for the relief of the starving Irish, it failed of passage, which prompted O'Callaghan's correspondent to write: "With regard to Congress and the Irish relief bill I think the democratic members acted ungenerous, ungrateful and unkind & when the time arrives that any of them comes in the way of the People be assured that they will feel the weight of the adopted Citizens ballot."⁹⁹

Elgin had decided that a general election was necessary during the winter of 1847-48 to clarify the political situation. The result was a solid victory for LaFontaine's party in Canada East, including the victory of LaFontaine and Benjamin Holmes in Montreal, where they received solid support from the Irish and won by margins of three to

⁹⁷ Guy, pp. 40-50.

⁹⁸ M. McMahon to O'Callaghan, 4 May 1847, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3.

⁹⁹ M. McMahon to O'Callaghan, 13 June 1847, *ibid.*

one.¹⁰⁰ In Canada West the reformers had also won, although narrowly.¹⁰¹ Among those elected in the east was Louis-Joseph Papineau, for the prodigal was now prepared to reassert his position as leader of French Canada. O'Callaghan was pleased at his return to politics, even though he had heard from E.-R. Fabre that Papineau was the object of intrigues by the clique headed by LaFontaine.¹⁰²

O'Callaghan had read Papineau's address to the electors of Huntingdon and St. Maurice, which proposed the abolition of the Union and an elective government like that of the United States.¹⁰³ He commented:

...it afforded me peculiar gratification, that your experience since 1837 has only confirmed and strengthened the views you had previously entertained. It was a just and indignant rebuke of those who, in your absence had so often misrepresented you, and who, even after your return were desirous that the public should believe that you participated in the errors of weak, however well meaning, men who had become the dupes of Lord Metcalfe. The stand you have taken on the foul Act uniting Upper and Lower Canada, as well as on the question of an Elective Council could not well be avoided....No man can, hereafter, say that you tacitly consented to the passage of the one, or the abandonment of the other.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Peter, pp. 35-36. LaFontaine received 1,977 votes, Holmes 1,969, while their two opponents tallied only 679 and 664: The Pilot, 14 January 1848, cited in Peter, p. 68.

¹⁰¹ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 263-67; Careless, pp. 117-118.

¹⁰² E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 11 February 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1. In this letter Fabre assured O'Callaghan that he had "un ami bien sincere [sic] dans M. Papineau, il me parle souvent de vous."

¹⁰³ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 289-91.

¹⁰⁴ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 February 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4327 and Papineau Papers, ANQ.

O'Callaghan advised Papineau to concentrate his energies on various specific points: the recognition of population as the basis of parliamentary representation; universal suffrage, and the abolition of property qualifications; vote by ballot and one day elections; municipal reform, including primary town elections; a good jury law; the encouragement of trade with the United States and the building of railroads to accommodate that trade; the reform of the educational system; and the granting of small lots gratis to settlers, as well as the removal of many of the restrictions of the seigneurial regime.¹⁰⁵ O'Callaghan was not exaggerating when he wrote that his "residence here makes my mind, daily, more Democratic, and my views more thouroughly [sic] Radical, though conservatism sometimes shakes its diffident head in my face."¹⁰⁶

Papineau was not about to adopt all of O'Callaghan's proposed policies, but he respected O'Callaghan and knew he could count on him for support. He wrote that no one in public life was as attached as O'Callaghan to popular liberties, that all he said and wrote came from the heart, and that he had no better friend in troubled times.¹⁰⁷ The doctor had warned him that Mackenzie, whose enmity against the Lower Canadian leader had never ceased to grow since the failures of 1837 and

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. See also O'Callaghan to Papineau, 24 June 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4410.

¹⁰⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 February 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4327.

¹⁰⁷ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 22 February 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3.

1838, was more than ever adamant against him, and had recently asked O'Callaghan's opinion of his plan to publish a pamphlet denouncing him. Papineau's loyal friend had done all he could to dissuade the irate Scotsman, but apparently to no avail, for Mackenzie was determined to prevent their old comrade from re-acquiring his position as Speaker of the Assembly.¹⁰⁸ The doctor himself suspected that he might also be subjected to criticism, although "I am not aware of having ever done him any but acts of kindness. Perhaps this is the reason why I am to be dragged out."¹⁰⁹ But, O'Callaghan mused, perhaps it was all just a threat aimed at forcing Papineau to support his return to Canada.¹¹⁰

O'Callaghan's deep commitment to his old homeland made him sometimes regret the space and time which now separated them. He put some of his feelings in words in a letter to Papineau:

I am sometimes sorry that I'm not again with you to aid in the dissemination of light, truth and the

¹⁰⁸ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 February 1848, Papineau Papers, ANQ.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. O'Callaghan suspected that Mackenzie was once again under the baneful influence of an unnamed "Medical adviser" who was treating his son.

¹¹⁰ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 February 1848, Papineau Papers, ANQ. Mackenzie was certainly desperate to return, and was willing to go to almost any length to achieve that purpose--in stark contrast to O'Callaghan's acceptance of his fate in the United States. Mackenzie confessed to John Neilson that he had gone too far in opposing the government, and that he was wrong to risk so much in trying to extend American principles of government to Canada. Moreover, he added, he was now "a friend of peace" promoting close ties with Britain! And he stated that Papineau would only lead Canada "into a channel...which will be injurious in the long run." Not satisfied with these protestations of redemption, he wrote again, insisting "I am infinitely [sic] more loyal in feeling--infinitely less American in principle than I was when I crossed the Niagara in 1837. W.L. Mackenzie to John Neilson, 25 February and 24 May 1847, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

great democratic principles of liberty. England and its tyranny have forced me to serve an apprenticeship of ten years in the Republican School. I would not be sorry that she should be able to judge of my progress as a Scholar. But perhaps it is better otherwise. Possibly I could only embarrass you, and retard rather than promote Canadian freedom. For though I love Canada well, perhaps I do not love "wisely." However, I love you, and this will make up for all other errors.¹¹¹

There were, indeed, reasons for a true "democrat" to remain in the United States. Papineau, once again an elected politician, was soon bitter. He complained that Canada, like Ireland and England, was subject to a system of universal corruption, which involved "l'exploitation des masses au profit du petit nombre." He reported that he was disgusted with the public men of the country, who had all repudiated their past involvements with the struggle to liberate Canada from oppression: "Ne pouvant empêcher le pillage, ils sont persuadés qu'en prendre leur part c'est diminuer le mal.... Ils jurent incessamment [sic] contre tout ce qui est Français ou Américain; ils sont Anglais, et si on leur donne le gouvernement responsable dans sa sincérité, ils n'ont rien à envier à leurs voisins." Papineau was so appalled, in fact, by the position of such "leaders" as A.-N. Morin who had recently been made Speaker--a position Papineau coveted¹¹²--that he was actually repelled by his own return to politics. They wanted nothing but responsible government and pleaded "necessity," arguing that the proximity of the United States would make the province prosperous despite Britain's ill will.¹¹³

¹¹¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 March 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4346.

¹¹² Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 275-76.

¹¹³ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 27 March 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1, and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3.

It was, above all, what Papineau considered the ingratitude of these old friends and allies which upset him: their charges that he and O'Callaghan had led them too far; that the refusal of supply and the violence of the Vindicator embroiled them in "une lutte prématurée dans laquelle il était aisé de prévoir que nous succomberions." They were, moreover, determined to destroy him, but if they failed, he wrote to O'Callaghan, "vous viendrez m'aider à rendre la vie à un cadavre, au pays, où ils ont remplacé le sentiments de fierté nationale, par celui de l'adulation coloniale; l'amour de la liberté et de la patrie par l'amour du repos et de l'argent."¹¹⁴

O'Callaghan was continuing to pursue his hopes for Canada in his own way. He suggested to someone obviously powerful in American government that the United States

...admit all Canadian produce, duty free, into this Country. You would thus become the purchasers of whatever surplus the Canada Merchants have to dispose of, who, in return, would buy their spring and fall supplies from you. Instead of having commercial relations with Monarchical England they would have them, with Republican America, and you would in turn be their carriers to a foreign market.... Increased intercourse will engender mutual regard and friendship and a better knowledge of the political workings of your institutions, and the affections of this powerful class will be eventually weaned from that country now your sole most powerful & most dangerous rival.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ O'Callaghan to ? (corrected draft), 3 April 1848, no. 2, *ibid.* Such a bill had already been presented to Congress by the Committee on Commerce, and had been supported by a Committee from Canada, but it had been "arrested" in its progress. There are three separate corrected drafts dated 3 April from O'Callaghan to unnamed correspondents. This is the second one.

But O'Callaghan's desires for Canada went beyond free trade and Republicanism--to another correspondent he wrote of his belief that "the Northern part of this Continent is destined by Providence to be, ere long, disenthralled from its Colonial vassalage, and to assume that place in this Republic originally assigned to it in the original Articles of Confederation."¹¹⁶ Despite his feelings about the annexation of Texas, O'Callaghan believed that Canada's destiny--or at least its best hope of liberty--lay with the United States, and, like Papineau, he favored its annexation.

O'Callaghan was convinced, however, that the British were determined to keep Canada in a state of colonial subservience. Its present political condition, moreover, was "deplorable." Responsible government he considered a sham, for the presence of rotten boroughs and a property qualification for electors and candidates made the Assembly unrepresentative of the people, while the governor maintained the ability to nominate the Legislative Council, "to originate many votes and Bills," and to alter the composition of the executive whenever he met with disagreement by the use of patronage and bribery. The British authorities were prepared, in effect, to respect "the Will of the Majority only so long as it accords with, or pampers [sic] to its own predetermined policy."¹¹⁷ He seems to have concluded that, in light of the abysmal failures of 1837 and 1838, only American influence could overcome that of Britain, and only annexation could put an end to colonial rule.

Canada was enduring hard times by 1848. The repeal of the Corn

¹¹⁶ O'Callaghan to ? (corrected draft), 3 April 1848, no. 3, *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Laws by the British in 1846 had undermined the agricultural economy of the country, wreaking havoc not only in the countryside but in the cities as well, including Montréal, where trade was adversely affected. At the same time, moreover, large numbers of destitute immigrants, many of them victims of the Irish Famine, were arriving in the Canadas, where they were scarcely welcome.¹¹⁸ Yet, while the French-Canadian working class might be disturbed by these developments, and the Montreal merchants depressed, French-Canadian professionals soon found that their hopes were about to be fulfilled. After their success in the winter elections, Elgin had called upon the reformers of LaFontaine and Baldwin to form a government. Once in power, LaFontaine distributed patronage widely, even reserving government announcements for those newspapers which supported him. Thus he demonstrated the benefits of his policy of responsible government, and solidified his party. The goals of the professional middle class had thus largely been fulfilled not by Papineau or Viger, but by LaFontaine and his policy of cooperation with the British and the Upper Canadians within the Union.¹¹⁹

Papineau, however, did not agree with LaFontaine's vision of French-Canadian prosperity in a united Canada. Europe was experiencing great political upheaval at this time, as in February 1848 the French monarchy had been overthrown and replaced by a republican government. Both O'Callaghan and Papineau were pleased, but the latter could not resist a comparison: "Tout est gloire, bonheur, progrès dans le reste

¹¹⁸ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 272-3; Careless, p. 109.

¹¹⁹ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 279-80.

du monde entier--tout est bassesse, apprehension,...movement retrograde dans la societe Canadienne."¹²⁰ He obviously had no faith in the present reform leaders, and he finally decided to break openly with them. In March he denounced the Union, called for an end to British rule and, seeking habitant and clerical support, advocated the colonization of undeveloped lands. He accused LaFontaine and his associates of corruption and hypocrisy, and awaited the return of his old followers.¹²¹ But many were now tied solidly to LaFontaine, under whose leadership they had prospered.¹²² He did attract the support of the young intellectuals attached to L'Institut Canadien and the newspaper L'Avenir, such as the Dorion brothers, but these were insufficient to give Papineau any chance against LaFontaine, who was about to use his control of most of the province's newspapers to launch a vicious attack on his old leader.¹²³

LaFontaine's press showed few scruples in the campaign launched against the old patriote leader. Its centerpiece was a virulent attack on his courage during the uprising of 1837. Led by Wolfred Nelson, the critics charged that Papineau had fomented rebellion, aimed at personal aggrandisement, but had lost his nerve and fled before the crucial battle of St. Denis. Papineau countered that he had left at the behest of Nelson himself. LaFontaine had written in 1838--that Papineau and O'Callaghan had left Nelson's house before the battle because they dis-

¹²⁰ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 19 April 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3.

¹²¹ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 288-93.

¹²² See *ibid.*, p. 361.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-87.

approved of resistance to the British, but that "Papineau aurait pu l'empêcher. Ne l'ayant pas fait, il aurait dû se battre."¹²⁴ This is a good summation of the case made against Papineau, and it would convince many people to remove the old leader from his pedestal.

O'Callaghan realized that Papineau would need a strong press to defend him, and he urged him to ensure the support of a French language newspaper, which could as well be located in Quebec City as Montreal. The doctor felt that Le Canadien could probably be brought around to the support of the old patriote's views.¹²⁵ He was also concerned, though, with his own reputation, for he believed that some among the political leaders of Canada East

...do not love me, and would rather see me "revel-
ling in the halls of the Montezumas" than in a
printing office in Montreal. Had I consented, in
1837, to attach myself to Intrigue as I was invited
to do, by some who now hold a high head in your
Country, I would not be here today. But none of my
family has ever been a traitor to friendship and
confidence & I thought I could afford to wait for
Time to do Justice to me and my motives, without
betraying those who honored me with their confi-
dence. I am sorry that Mr. Morin and Mr. Cherrier
should feel so unjust towards me.¹²⁶

He was upset that A.-N. Morin and C.-S. Cherrier blamed him for his con-

¹²⁴ L.-H. LaFontaine to Henry Chapman, quoted in Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 324. See also Résumé Impartial de la discussion Papineau-Nelson sur les événements de Saint-Denis en 1837 (Montreal: n.p., 1848; Montreal: Réédition-Quebec, 1968).

¹²⁵ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 April 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4372. He was correct. See Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 299.

¹²⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 16 April 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4372-73.

duct of the Vindicator, when all he did was to carry out his written instructions to support the majority in the Assembly. Cherrier, he argued, might as well blame himself for they voted together, and Morin himself, "as it was he who drew up the Address refusing Supplies." If they had erred, they had done it together. And he held no grudge:

I have not recriminated during the past ten years, and I do not intend to recriminate now. The quarrel in which I was struck down was not a private one--it was neither yours, nor Mr. Cherriers [sic] nor mine. It was a just struggle for a Peoples [sic] rights and a People's liberties, and I fell, merely because I was one of the advanced guard--as Editor of a Canadian Paper; as one of the Representatives of the Canadian People I earned the hate & experienced the vengeance of those who oppressed that People. The tables now, however, are turned, and singular to say; whilst enemies forgive and grant amnesties, it is friends who denounce & ostracise.¹²⁷

O'Callaghan could not abide principles "so suicidal, so destructive of good faith, and national honor and gratitude,...for who is there that will act honestly and disinterestedly for the People of Canada, when it comes to be known that they measure a man's merit only by his success." Obviously, he concluded, "to be appreciated, honesty and integrity are of less value, than art, intrigue & cleverness in escaping from the responsibility of one's acts."¹²⁸ But the doctor remained confident "that the day will yet come, when those who know me best, will do my character & my motives justice, and that those whom I served will at least acknowledge that if I erred it was through...zeal for popular

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

liberty. I much rather suffer in such a cause than triumph with the opposite party."¹²⁹

It was a heartfelt complaint, indicating the bitterness which O'Callaghan felt. His exile, now in its eleventh year, was still unpleasant for the fifty-one year old doctor. His indictment of those who gained by always testing the wind before setting sail--and who were ever ready to alter their course at its dictates--but were nonetheless honored and revered by their fellows, was in great part justified. It is not surprising that he sympathized with another unbendable man, Mackenzie, who had recently suffered further serious setbacks. He had resigned his post at the New York Tribune over a disagreement with the owner, and one of his daughters had been committed to an asylum because of "excessive excitement brought on by Methodism."¹³⁰ The chances of Mackenzie being allowed to return to Canada, at least, were improving.¹³¹ O'Callaghan reported to Papineau that "Mr. McK. is now sanguine, and I presume he will be back in Canada before this year has expired, as he will no doubt get his friends at once to work to have the necessary papers forwarded."¹³²

Despite his own tribulations, and those of his old friends, O'Callaghan still retained bright hopes for the future of Canada, which he was convinced would, in time, gain its independence. But he believed

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 4373.

¹³¹ Ibid. Earl Grey at the Colonial Office had intimated to an envoy of the exile that his exclusion from the general amnesty might be lifted in the face of "petitions or applications" sent on Mackenzie's account from Canada: *ibid.*

¹³² Ibid.

the struggle would be hard, since Conservatism and Progress were once again the underlying principles of Canadian politics. He strongly urged Papineau to seek

...an understanding, in fact an alliance, with the clergy, the mass of which, "like those of Ireland belong to the industrious, honest, hard working classes, by whom love of country has been always cherished in an eminent degree in every quarter. Peculiarities of Education may have its [sic] influence, yet I have but very rarely met with a Catholic Priest who was not the friend of Progress, and the well wisher of those who struggle for liberty. The head of the Priesthood & the Church has in our day been the Apostle of the Political regeneration of Italy and gave the sanction of Religion to the Cause of Human Rights.¹³³

O'Callaghan was therefore pleased at Papineau's encouragement of a movement to colonize unsettled areas of the province, which was also supported by the clergy.

The influence on O'Callaghan of the participation of many Irish priests on the side of rebellion in 1798 seems evident. Pius IX's accession to the Papacy in 1846 moreover, had caused a good deal of hope among Catholic liberals that the Church could be lured into an alliance with the cause of reform. While philosophically quite possible--there are in fact many elements quite consistent even with socialism in Catholic thinking--politically the Church was a very established, highly conservative body not likely to endorse principles which endangered the social order. Above all, the adherence of the upper clergy to the regime in Canada, as in Ireland, was a factor omitted from O'Callaghan's analysis. The result was a conclusion quite far removed from reality,

¹³³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 10 May 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4380.

and soon to be even more so.

On 1 July 1848, O'Callaghan was finally able to resign his position at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and take up his duties as state archivist in Albany. To do so he was obliged to accept a salary of only \$800 a year, \$400 less than in his old position.¹³⁴ And he had to argue vociferously to get even that--the government had wanted to pay him \$600, despite the fact that the documents to be edited were in French, Dutch and Latin as well as English, and thus had to be translated as well as transcribed.¹³⁵ While \$800 was no fortune, the advantages of the job for O'Callaghan were obvious: he would be paid to do what he now seemed most to enjoy.

O'Callaghan's spirits were undoubtedly lifted by his new position and just before assuming his duties, he cautioned Papineau against "the tone of discouragement and hopelessness" of his last letter:

'Hope on, hope ever!' must be the Motto of the Patriot and Reformer, and the more cheerless the prospect, the stronger must be the hope....A people robbed for over half a century of their rights, and cheated into apathy and passive obedience by those in whom they repose confidence may require some time before they can devise correctly an idea of the position or see through the character of those men who would reduce them to mere machines to be thrown into convulsions when they are out of office and to be laid by in the lumber loft when they (the wire

¹³⁴ Guy, pp. 48-49. See also O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 24 June 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4412.

¹³⁵ O'Callaghan to Robert Pruyn, 11 May 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 3. The editor, O'Callaghan had stressed, must be aware of the material already published, but he was not prepared to become a fourth rate clerk for \$6-700 a year at his stage of life. If, he had warned, they preferred to get someone cheaper, they should recall the man they had hired to translate some old papers who "absolutely interpolated some comments of his own into the body of the Record which, in some instances, have been published as part of the original!" Ibid.

pullers) are in power. Yet for all that, I regard less the influence of these wire pullers than the good sense of the masses.¹³⁶

Still, he warned Papineau that his enemies were dangerous: "Intrigue is their fortê. There is not a pulsebeat in any artery of their bodies... that is not impelled by this feeling, and if intrigue can aid them in accomplishing your destruction as a public man, they will spare no pains to accomplish their objective."¹³⁷

Yet O'Callaghan believed Papineau could recapture the hearts of the people by the next election, because four more years of power would force LaFontaine into "close alliance...with the enemies of his country and her Institutions. This he cannot avoid with his adhesion to the Union and his subjection to Hincks, Baldwin & co."¹³⁸ O'Callaghan noted, moreover, that annexation, perhaps the most promising solution to Canada's predicament, was growing in favour south of the border.¹³⁹ And the doctor believed it would benefit not only Canada, but the United States as well--for it would strengthen the anti-slavery forces there.¹⁴⁰

Life was not always easy for those who had returned to Canada from exile and Papineau was finding that his political resurrection

¹³⁶ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 24 June 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-82, 3: 4412.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 4406.

¹⁴⁰ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 21 February 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-82, 3: 4331.

would require exactly what the word implies: a miracle.¹⁴¹ His republican sympathies were no longer viable under the changed circumstances, and his annexationism would soon find its strongest supporters in some Montreal Tories! As for the Irish of Lower Canada, their interests were now being championed by Lewis Drummond and Francis Hincks, and most of them seemed to be devoted, as was the majority of the French-Canadian population, to moderate reform and responsible government. A significant minority supported the Tories, but the majority, especially among the Catholics, generally supported the policies of LaFontaine.

Papineau was anxious, however, to resurrect some of his old Irish support, and he tried to use the issue of repeal during this tumultuous year to secure it. A mass rally was held at Bonsecours Market of the Montreal Loyal National Repeal Association at which Bernard Devlin and Papineau spoke, praising the heroic conduct of the people of France and calling on French Canadians and Irish alike to support the cause of repeal of the Union in both Ireland and Canada.¹⁴² Hincks' newspaper, the Pilot, loyal to LaFontaine, expressed indignation, charging that Papineau and Devlin, along with the "intriguer" Dominick Daly, who had served on the Executive Council with both LaFontaine and Viger, were trying to create the impression that there was discontent in Canada. It was acceptable for Irish Canadians to press for repeal, but "it becomes a widely different matter when it is proposed that Canadians of other origins should join in an agitation, the avowed object of which is to

¹⁴¹ Roy, p. 149.

¹⁴² "Ireland and France: Repeal-Monster Meeting," Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4357-58; Pilot, 11, 16, 18 and 23 May.

encourage rebellion against the Sovereign of an United Kingdom."¹⁴³ LaFontaine and Hincks obviously saw the meeting as the start of a campaign to recreate the old Irish-French radical alliance, and they were determined to sabotage the effort. Charging Papineau with desiring to dictate to "the Liberal party," the Pilot warned that he really wanted annexation, which would lead to the assimilation of French Canada: "the Union was indispensably necessary to secure political freedom for the whole Canadian people, but more especially for the French Canadians."¹⁴⁴

The battle between the forces of Papineau and those of LaFontaine required on both sides the means of propaganda, and the former soon established a newspaper at Quebec City devoted to repeal: the Emigrant.¹⁴⁵ It was obviously targeted at the Irish Catholic population of the city. LaFontaine's party, though, had preempted its opponents by opening another paper, the Quebec Spectator, which advocated keeping Irish and Canadian affairs separate.¹⁴⁶ But the Pilot was still uncontested among the Irish in Montreal, and interest began to be expressed in setting up a repeal paper there. O'Callaghan was an obvious man to edit such a newspaper and he was convinced of the need for a good English-language radical newspaper in the city, for he considered the

¹⁴³ Pilot, 18 May 1848.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 25 May 1848.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 23 May 1848. It was published from 25 May 1848 until sometime in 1849: Beaulieu and Hamelin, p. 162.

¹⁴⁶ Pilot, 22 June 1848. It was published from 3 May until 30 October 1848: Beaulieu and Hamelin, pp. 161-62.

Pilot as nothing but "a Second Edition of the Transcript."¹⁴⁷ Sydney Bellingham, an "ultra Tory" in 1837, who was now, according to Papineau, "un Liberal pursang," was working to set up the paper, which was to be called the United Irishman. Papineau was convinced that O'Callaghan would be the best man to edit it.

...si...on pouvait engager un homme des principes, du talent, de la connaissance acquise des hommes & des événements publics du Canada, du Dr. O'Callaghan, à venir prendre la rédaction du nouveau journal, ce serait le meilleur de tous les moyens de créer le plus énergique esprit d'Union entre les Irlandais et les Canadiens."¹⁴⁸

He accepted that O'Callaghan would demand complete editorial control, but in a letter to Viger expressed his reservations about asking him to return to share their sufferings in Canada: "mais je vous dis et je lui dis que ses principes, son ^{son} devouement, ses connaissances et sa diligence, sont le moyen le plus efficace que je connaisse d'obtenir des larges réformes dont nous avons un besoin urgent."¹⁴⁹ He suggested, therefore, that E.-R. Fabre be sent to Albany in an effort to convince O'Callaghan to return, and he wrote to O'Callaghan suggesting that he accept.¹⁵⁰ But the doctor was not convinced. He wrote to Papineau: "I have made up my mind that I shall never again be a salaried Editor, or

¹⁴⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 24 June 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4412.

¹⁴⁸ L.-J. Papineau to D.-B. Viger, 1 July 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4417.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 4418.

¹⁵⁰ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 28 October 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 2.

the Editor of a paper the management of which I cannot control. Should an English paper be established in Canada such as I should like to see, I could not therefore be its Editor unless I have more money than I have now--for unless the press is my own I am not to be its Editor."¹⁵¹ In the end, then, O'Callaghan did not return. The paper saw life only briefly, as did its Quebec counterpart.¹⁵² Few Irish, it seems, were willing to appear disloyal--by supporting repeal and annexation--any more than they were in 1837, especially when Papineau could not rally the majority of French Canada.¹⁵³

Ireland was still beset by famine, disease and emigration in 1848 and many, including O'Callaghan's sister Mary Anne, could see no solution except, perhaps, Father Mathew and his temperance drive. She wrote that she loved the priest "next to the Almighty," and asked for a donation.¹⁵⁴ But she loved her brother Edmund as well, and promised him that, despite his fears, politics could never come between them.¹⁵⁵ The repeated failure of the potato crop in Ireland was making it impossible for many poor peasants to pay their rents, and they were being evicted by their landlords. Many had no choice but to emigrate--to

¹⁵¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 24 June 1848, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4412.

¹⁵² Beaulieu and Hamelin, p. 162, states: "19 juin 1848 - Hebdomadaire." There is no further information. Note, however, that Papineau was trying to secure O'Callaghan's services as editor after this date.

¹⁵³ See Peter, pp. 37-46.

¹⁵⁴ Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 4 October 1848, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4. Canada East had its own version of Father Mathew in the charismatic Father Chiniquy whose Temperance Society was growing rapidly: see Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 282.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

North America if they could raise the fare. But disease was rampant, and many died on board ship, in the fever sheds at Grosse Isle, or in the towns where they came ashore. Thirteen thousand would die in 1849, five thousand of them in Montreal and Quebec City.¹⁵⁶ Fear of disease caused a riot in Quebec City in 1849 when it was proposed that the customs building in the port be turned into a cholera hospital. There were also rumours that Irish Americans intent on the liberation of Ireland were preparing to invade Canada. There were meetings of "Young Irishmen" within the province as well, and French-Canadian hostility to the Irish grew.¹⁵⁷ Thus the famine emigration, like that of 1832 and 1834, put a good deal of pressure on Irish-French relations, and their cooperation in radical or reform circles was undoubtedly often no more than a marriage of convenience.

The revolutions of 1848 in Europe had largely petered out by the end of the year--with Louis Napoleon overwhelmingly elected to the presidency of France. In the Canadas, the moderate reformers, led by Robert Baldwin in Canada West and LaFontaine--whom E.-R. Fabre now described as "d'un orgueil insupportable" [sic]¹⁵⁸--in Canada East, were about to cement their achievement of responsible government with the signing of the Rebellion Losses Bill into law by Lord Elgin, despite his personal reservations. LaFontaine had consolidated his hold on the majority of French Canadians by his use of patronage--he had allowed "the members of the Canadien professional bourgeoisie to escape at last

¹⁵⁶ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 263.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 272.

¹⁵⁸ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 9 April 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

from their frustrations."¹⁵⁹ The graduates of the collèges classiques could now turn to a career in the bureaucracy, and this assured their support for responsible government and the British regime.¹⁶⁰ The professional middle class, therefore, largely rejected Papineau's calls for the annulment of the Union because they were reconciled to the present system and feared the cultural, political and economic effects of any drastic change. Thus LaFontaine, using his control of much of the press, which he maintained through the distribution of lucrative contracts for government announcements, was able to neutralize, or as Jacques Monet puts it, destroy "King Papineau."¹⁶¹

The Rebellion Losses Bill aimed to finalize the destruction of Papineau's constituency by removing old grievances. Lord Elgin had already done all he could to strengthen LaFontaine, even reciting the speech opening Parliament in both French and English. But the bill would also provide Papineau with new allies, for many English in the province were infuriated by it, since it proposed to compensate rebels as well as loyalists. Already angry at what they considered British betrayal in the repeal of the Corn Laws and the end of imperial preference, which had devastated the Canadian economy, they now turned to support of Papineau's most recent panacea--annexation. Thus, with the support of the young rouges of L'Avenir, some old patriotes, a number of Irish repealers, and Neilson's followers in Quebec, Papineau launched a final challenge to LaFontaine--with the support of the Tories of

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 279.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 288-393.

Montreal! And he now called for the abolition of tithes, while L'Avenir went even further in attacking the Church.¹⁶² He had fallen into the same anti-clerical trap as Viger--and LaFontaine sprung it mercilessly. Papineau was becoming largely irrelevant in Canada, and many other old patriotes were now opposed to him. Only E.-R. Fabre, who won election as mayor of Montreal in 1848 and 1850, despite his support for annexation, was still both loyal to Papineau and in a position of power.¹⁶³ Fabre may have been correct that LaFontaine was too fond of power to resign over the Rebellion Losses Bill--but Lord Elgin was not about to call his bluff.¹⁶⁴ If corruption and compromise could maintain Canada East within the Empire, the British were willing to pay the price. Free trade made it possible to loosen the imperial ties, and financial considerations made it desirable. The British demonstrated a flexibility by 1849 that they had not during the 1830's, and LaFontaine was well suited to deal with them, as Papineau would never have been.

The days of the patriotes were clearly over. Papineau was out of place now, a Don Quixote pining for a day that was dead or one that would never be born. Both he and O'Callaghan idolized the United States, and both were unable to see the contradictions inherent within its political and social structure or the dangers for French-Canadian culture which must accompany annexation. It is ironic that such nationalists would come, because of their liberalism, to advocate such an anti-nationalist policy.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 295-96, 327-53.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 352-53.

¹⁶⁴ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 9 April 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1; and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4.

Papineau's campaign for annexation could easily be portrayed by LaFontaine and his press as endangering the survival of French Canada. Even Mackenzie disapproved, writing to Wolfred Nelson of Papineau's "unsure and unpatriotic" course.¹⁶⁵ By 1850 the Tories were losing interest, as glimmerings of prosperity began to return, and Papineau's forces could not even win a crucial by-election in Quebec City, where they were strongest. The old leader of French Canada, as the historian Jacques Monet puts it, "had been reduced to an ineffectual nuisance."¹⁶⁶ O'Callaghan was better off in the United States. Had he returned to Canada, he would have found himself in a very strange land indeed, a place where principles, at least in politics, had been largely replaced by practicalities--and patronage.

¹⁶⁵ W.L. Mackenzie to W. Nelson, 3 April 1848, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. But he may have just been trying to impress Nelson, for he desperately wanted to be pardoned. The letter was never actually sent. But in a note on a letter from Nelson to Mackenzie, the latter wrote: "LaFontaine was not half the talent nor a tithe of the knowledge of Papineau--both are egotists." The note was attached to: Nelson to Mackenzie, 23 April 1848, *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, p. 333. See also pp. 379-391.

CHAPTER X

EX-PATRIOTE

1850-1880

At your next planting, pray, put down in your garden, or somewhere near your house, a young maple or apple tree, and call it O'Callaghan's tree--it will be emblematic of my attachment to your country, which has struck its roots deep and though I am far away, has never yet been torn up or destroyed, but is as strong now as when we first crossed the frontier.

E.B. O'Callaghan, 1852¹

O'Callaghan's destiny by 1850 clearly lay in the United States. Early in 1850 he celebrated his fifty-third birthday, and he was now established in a secure, if not very well paid, position as archivist of the state of New York. He had established solid ties in his new homeland, and he obviously felt comfortable with its democratic traditions. Unlike Mackenzie, the serious flaws beneath the democratic facade did not seem much to concern O'Callaghan. Thus he would have found it difficult to uproot himself and return to Canada--even had the situation there been favorable. But it was not. Papineau was largely discredited and the cause of annexation was failing to build momentum--E.-R. Fabre believed it was hindered by memories of the troubles of 1837

¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 15 February 1852, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4826. He added: "when I return 'not to return', I will wish to see how my tree flourishes and whether Miss Azelie has been good and attentive to it for her old friend's sake".

and 1838.² Politically, then, O'Callaghan would have found himself supporting a cause with little chance of success. Better by far, he must have concluded, to remain where he was.

Yet he maintained his interest in matters Canadian, visiting the country, corresponding with old friends, occasionally even giving some thought to returning. This chapter will examine O'Callaghan's last years, which were devoted increasingly to his archival work, for which he had given up the practice of medicine--"the labor was too arduous, and the remuneration inadequate to the fatigue."³ And he was one of the only old patriotes still left in exile, along with Robert Nelson, for even Mackenzie had finally been allowed to return home.⁴

One wonders if he took some solace in the presence in the United States of other exiles--of D'Arcy McGee, a fugitive from Young Ireland's attempted revolution of 1848, and his fellow conspirator, John Mitchel, escaped from Van Diemen's Land and editing a New York newspaper by 1853. Even the great Hungarian nationalist Louis Kossuth was homeless after 1848, and visited New York in 1851.⁵ O'Callaghan, though, was

² E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 24 November 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1, and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4. Early in 1850, however, Fabre who, as mayor of Montreal, would not take a public stand on the issue, reported that the cause of annexation "gagne tous les gens à Montréal, & à Québec, l'Election de Légaré est me ditons [sic] assurée": E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 17 January 1850, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4. But Légaré lost, a clear indication that annexationism was doomed: see Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 387-91.

³ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, Chapman Papers, 19 September 1853, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 77.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁵ See Florence Gibson, The Attitudes of the New York Irish toward State and National Affairs 1848-1892 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), pp. 64-67.

less famous--almost forgotten at times, it must have seemed to him. But he had his wife, his friends, his work, his religion--he had led a very unsettled life until he was over forty years old, and it was not surprising that he sought some security during his later years. His principles, however, never changed--he was ever the champion of democracy and the foe of oppression. But by the 1850's the old Irish patriote was something of a ghost--a spectre of times past and of dreams unfulfilled, of objectives perhaps unobtainable.

Back in Canada, Papineau was unwilling to accept that he had lost his predominance. He wrote that, while at first greatly disturbed by the defection of so many old patriotes to LaFontaine, the cause of annexation had delivered to him the support of "les volontaires de '37."⁶ And Montreal was in a sad state: business was dead and commerce very poor: "la ville est triste," its mayor E.-R. Fabre wrote to O'Callaghan, with many buildings burnt down, including the Parliament which a Tory crowd had sacked after Elgin had signed the Rebellion Losses Bill, and with cholera once again arriving on the immigrant ships.⁷ The English merchants, the historian F.-X. Garneau reported, blamed Papineau and the "damned french rebels" for their problems, despite the fact that the source of their difficulties lay with the free trade policy of Great Britain.⁸

O'Callaghan maintained his hope, and his belief in Canada's ulti-

⁶ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 1 February 1850, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4.

⁷ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 24 November 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1, and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4.

⁸ F.-X. Garneau to O'Callaghan, 9 May 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4.

mate liberation remained firm. He wrote to Papineau:

The greatest foe you have in Canada is General Apathy. Liberty and liberal principles must triumph in the long run when the masses are thoroughly leavened, and though you mention the activity of the Clergy as Politicians, this would give me not the smallest concern. They will only help to keep the People alive and thinking, and when they once begin to think, Liberty must be the gainer.⁹

Yet he was concerned by the rôle played by the clergy in Canada, even though "there are few who entertain a greater respect for the clergy than I do." He believed they allowed themselves to be used by British governors like Craig, Gosford and Elgin because "you are a Colony."¹⁰

O'Callaghan's belief that Catholicism might co-exist with liberalism was, by 1850, quite remarkable. Unlikely but widely hoped for when Pius IX became Pope in 1846, the alliance had been given the coup de grâce by events in Italy in 1848. Chased from Rome by liberal Republicans, the Pope had returned to his throne behind the bayonets of Louis Napoleon. Once restored, his heartfelt desire for the betterment of man could only take note of political realities: Christ's empire might not have been of this world, but the Pope's most certainly was! The Irishman's faith, though, was apparently unshaken by events, or facts.

O'Callaghan's views on the liberation of Canada seem, by contrast, quite reasonable:

The emancipation of Canada from Colonial thralldom must be worked out and accomplished by the People of Canada. Friends here and elsewhere can Hur-

⁹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 12 February 1850, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4494.

¹⁰ Ibid.

rah! They did so in 1836 and 1837. But this sympathy is not one tenth so good as a vote... the hustings is...the breach through which the prize is to be conquered and gained.¹¹

He feared, though, that the cause of Canadian Annexation was at least temporarily on the wane in the United States.¹² At the same time he assured Papineau of the unity of the states, the devotion of the people to their government, and the unlikelihood of "Division or Separation into Northern & Southern Republics."¹³ As for his own labours, he related the various projects he had in hand, and commented: "For the present therefore I see nothing ahead but Work, work, work. This incessant labour is irksome, for it is like a long voyage, or a course, seemingly without end. My health, I thank God, is good. Yet I yearn for the time when I shall have more leisure, if it were but to accept your very affectionate and reiterated invitation to go and see Mde. P. and yourself and the Children."¹⁴ There is, it seems, no rest for the wicked nor for historians!

O'Callaghan remained on cordial terms with many old patriotes, including Papineau, E.-R. Fabre, D.-B. Viger and even Robert Nelson who was in San Francisco.¹⁵ He was still married, and communicated regu-

¹¹ Ibid., p. 4496.

¹² Ibid., pp. 4497-98. There appears a certain contradiction in this letter, since, as quoted earlier, O'Callaghan stressed the importance of Canadians freeing themselves, yet was evidently concerned by the lessening of support for annexationism in the United States.

¹³ Ibid., p. 4497.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 13 April 1850, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

larly with his sister, who was hoping and expecting that he would visit her in Ireland sometime in the next year. But all his brothers were dead, as well as both his children.¹⁶ His ties to Ireland, like those to Canada, were weakening.

The young radicals--or rouges--of the newspaper L'Avenir, who were supporting Papineau in his quest for annexation, were heaping abuse on the clergy--which opposed it--and this greatly disturbed Fabre, who believed Papineau should do more to curb their ardour, especially as his son Gustave was one of the principal culprits.¹⁷ O'Callaghan must certainly have concurred, and been appalled that the clergy was being driven onto the side of LaFontaine's moderate reformers--or bleues.¹⁸

LaFontaine's opponents were convinced of his personal unpopularity, and Fabre believed that he would have difficulty gaining re-election in the province.¹⁹ But LaFontaine never put this prediction to the test, for--tired and ill, and depressed by the resignations of Robert Baldwin and Francis Hincks--he himself resigned from office on 26 September 1851.²⁰ He was a shrewd politician, but his principles

¹⁶ See Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 6 February 1850, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4. She wrote: "God bless your wife, and send her another child of her own."

¹⁷ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 12 January 1851, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 5. See also Monet, The Last Cannon Shot, pp. 366-74.

¹⁸ It is ironic that LaFontaine had once been among the most strident anticlericals among the patriotes, and had written a pamphlet entitled Les deux girouettes, ou l'hypocrisie démasquée, attacking the clergy before 1837. See Jacques Monet, "Sir Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, 9: 441. But the political winds had since altered their direction.

¹⁹ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 24 November 1849, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1 and O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 4.

²⁰ Monet, "LaFontaine," p. 449. He was only 43 years old!

seemed capable of a good deal of compromise. His political manouvering was quite alien to Papineau and O'Callaghan--they found it, in fact, repugnant, and not just because it brought success to their opponent. They had both lost a great deal because of their adherence to an ideology, and it must have made Papineau bitter that LaFontaine's agents amongst the press had accused the patriote leader of betraying the cause in 1837--LaFontaine, after all, had been communing with the Governor while the rebellion was raging!²¹

O'Callaghan, suprisingly, seems to have seriously considered returning to Canada in 1851, probably to join the battle for annexation, but he was discouraged by Papineau, who took a very dim view of political prospects by that time.²² The seigneur of Petite Nation was thinking himself of retirement, and was spending more of his time on his rural estate.²³ It is understandable that, considering the course of events since his return, Papineau would not encourage O'Callaghan to come back. But the Irishman was clearly upset by what he saw as a rejection by his old friend, and Fabre tried diligently to reassure him that Papineau meant no offense.²⁴ Early in 1852 he wrote to the doctor that if Papineau had gone too far, it was because he was treated very badly by many old friends at the behest of LaFontaine: "tenez compte en tout [sic] cela mon cher Dr. et vous verrez, que Ls. Jos. n'est pas

²¹ See *ibid.*, p. 441.

²² See E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 14 December 1851, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 6 September 1851, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6.

aussi coupable qu'il vous parrait [sic]."²⁵

O'Callaghan was convinced that matters were not going well in Canada. He had written a letter to John Ryan which the latter had caused to be published in the Morning Chronicle of Quebec City, although O'Callaghan had requested that it be circulated privately. In it he had insisted that it was essential that an English-language paper be established, and a Reform Society which would circulate petitions and organize each ward, demanding universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual elections for the Assembly, an elective Legislative Council, abolition of property rights for membership in the Assembly, and concession of wild lands to settlers.²⁶ He argued that without a liberal press, it was not surprising that the voters had disappointed Ryan at the last elections.

For the last 14 years they have been left without a newspaper to give them any sound political instruction--Whatever principles were to be instilled in them, they received from a class of writers who have no feeling in common with democracy; in whose nostrils every thing like Republicanism stinks, and who would not raise the least objection to-morrow [sic] were the suffrage abridged instead of extended, and who have all their lives fattened and fed on the drippings of government jobs; no matter in whose hands the patronage has been, whoever was miller they were always the dogs.

He continued with flawless logic:

²⁵ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 11 January 1852, *ibid.*, vol. 6.

²⁶ O'Callaghan to Captain John Ryan, 22 December 1851, published in the Morning Chronicle, Quebec City, 2 January 1852. O'Callaghan estimated that only one out of thirteen inhabitants of Montreal and Quebec City could vote; the ratio in New York was one out of six.

Place any people, most of whose lives are spent in obtaining the daily necessities of support for themselves and families, place them...for fourteen years under the instruction and tutelage of such government hacks. And what, think you, will they come out at the end?²⁷

O'Callaghan traced the problem back to the "advent of the LaFontaine party to power [which] scattered the old Liberals of Canada sky high," as some sought positions while others remained loyal to principles. Even earlier, after Gosford's arrival, some had sold out, and LaFontaine had tried to convince Gosford to reconvene the Assembly once Papineau was outlawed knowing that "they'd have everything their own way." When this failed, he went to London and made a bargain with Lord Stanley. With "the disposition of the spoils" in their possession, LaFontaine's clique was joined by "the rest of the gentry who were in the market." Only a few remained steadfast, and this "chip off the old block...is all the Republicanism that is now left of the Canadian Liberal party of 1834, '5, '6 and '7."²⁸

Once the French Canadians had attained power under Bagot, O'Callaghan at once realized that "those 'adopted citizens' who belong to the old liberal party would very soon follow, if means and pains were not taken to keep them 'posted' in public events--for when you make watch dogs of wolves, what is to become of the sheep?" Yet when O'Callaghan suggested to friends the need for a liberal press, he was ignored--"Perhaps it was thought that I wanted a place for myself--though I distinctly stated the contrary, and would willingly see any

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

person at the post, provided the principles on which the paper was to be established were sound." But as things stood, Joseph Cauchon and his like were in power, and would, like the American nativists, be quite pleased to disenfranchise immigrants. Yet the coming year, O'Callaghan believed, was "one pregnant with Human Liberty. Already the ball has been set in motion in France....Is Louis Napoleon to be the sole advocate for universal suffrage?"²⁹ Papineau, O'Callaghan later confided to his old friend Chapman, was not pleased by this letter's "Radicalism."³⁰

The feud between O'Callaghan and Papineau might well have continued to escalate, for they did not see eye to eye on many points. O'Callaghan favoured the abolition or at least the reform of the seigneurial system so dear to Papineau's heart, and he supported other liberal measures such as universal suffrage about which the French Canadian seemed less than enthusiastic. O'Callaghan, moreover, must have been appalled by the anti-clericalism of Papineau's supporters at L'Avenir.²⁰ However, late in December 1851 Papineau's son Gustave died.³¹ He had also been a friend of O'Callaghan, and the doctor wrote the bereaved father to express his heartfelt condolences. Papineau was

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 75. Louis Perrault wrote O'Callaghan to ask him to forgive Ryan for making public a private correspondence, and added that he believed that L'Avenir had gone too far in its attacks on the clergy, and that this had hurt the liberals' chances in the last elections, but nonetheless he was confident that "L'Esprit de 1836 & 37 regne encore, et partout; il ne faut que un Esprit de Direction, et tout ira bien à Montréal malgré la corruption & l'influence du Gouvernement." He was supportive of the Institut Canadien and believed events would have ended more positively in 1837 had such a body existed; Louis Perrault to O'Callaghan, 3 January 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6.

³¹ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 18 December 1851, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6.

evidently touched, and he replied in moving terms, signalling an end to the growing bitterness of their quarrel:

Kind, true, and beloved friend--At all times you know how much are welcome to me and all my Family your good letters; therefore were they necessary and more than usually wellcomed [sic], under the sad bereavement which afflicts us. All that feeling, friendship, a strong enlightened pious mind can urge to bring relief, is more readily found and aptly expressed by our most trusty friend dear Doctor O'Callaghan, than by any one else.³²

Their friendship was, indeed, deep, and shortly after the state archivist wrote to the member of the Canadian Parliament:

I hope yet to return to live (or rather to die) in Canada--as the Hare, when hunted, returns at length to expire on the spot from which she was first started...for men, you know, do not carry even their first adopted country about in the soles of their shoes. Thus it is with me, I look forward yet to lay my bones in your soil.³³

O'Callaghan's sister, Mary Anne, had recently lost her husband, and she wrote that her nerves had given way. Father Mathew, the Irish temperance leader, was also ill, and she expected neither him nor herself to live much longer. But she proposed to visit Edmund and his wife in Albany, and hoped to travel around the United States with

³² L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 25 January 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, 2: 1.

³³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 15 February 1852, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 4826.

them.³⁴ As for Ireland, she believed it was "doomed...by its own disunion."³⁵ And of herself she wrote "I have no future now to look to, but the hope of seeing you ere I die."³⁶ She came that summer, but O'Callaghan decided not to defray her travelling expenses lest it make her appear destitute.³⁷

His sister was not the only person who proposed visiting O'Callaghan during the summer of 1852. Papineau suggested to E.-R. Fabre that they spend some time with their old friend in Albany, before his intended visit to Montreal.³⁸ And Fabre's son Hector was another bound for Albany. His father trusted that he would find in O'Callaghan

³⁴ Mary Anne Walsh to O'Callaghan, 12 February 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6. Father Mathew had apparently met O'Callaghan and his wife, for Mary Anne wrote that "Father Mathew told me, and he is very fastidious, that, your wife is a very nice little woman." The Corkers were proposing to erect a statue to her husband, Frank Walsh.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ O'Callaghan to Mary Anne Walsh (corrected draft), 17 May 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6. He wrote: "I shall only I fear give occasion to uncharitable remarks, and some will be found who, in the hope of causing me pain, will maybe misconstrue my affection, and attribute my defraying these expenses to the incorrect and unfounded presumption that you are unable to meet them yourself." But, he continued, "Once here, the case assumes altogether another character. You will then be my guest as well as my Sister, and it will be my duty as well as my pleasure, to render your home or your sojourn with us a source of happiness as well as comfort." But O'Callaghan was not a rich man, and his own financial situation may have influenced his discretion!

³⁸ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 23 February, 26 March and 17 May 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 6. Fabre wrote on 17 May that the date of departure was set and that he intended to take the waters at Saratoga first. Perhaps they thought O'Callaghan should be well briefed on the situation in Canada before he visited. But they may never have arrived, for the next summer O'Callaghan was eagerly anticipating a visit from Papineau and his family, despite Madame Papineau's recent illness: O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 23 June 1853, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 5026-27.

a true friend.³⁹ This would be the case, and the young Fabre and the aging doctor would become regular correspondents.

Later in the year O'Callaghan himself went on a journey of re-discovery when he visited Canada with his wife. They dined with Papineau, Viger and E.-R. Fabre, talking undoubtedly of politics both past and present.⁴⁰ They also visited Papineau's "magnificent chateau" at Petite Nation.⁴¹ O'Callaghan found "everything in Montreal changed --physically improved, but politically--quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore."⁴² He explained the reason for the change succinctly:

Responsible government introduced the French Canadians, for the first time to office. There was at once a rush for place, somewhat like the old Tail under O'Connell. The ministry had the patronage and at once public opinion became paralysed. Every one was afraid to comment on the acts of the government lest his chances...for public honours or profits might be affected. The consequence is the whole mass is corrupted. Now the government has gone into building Rail roads [sic]--every one is expecting to be benefited thereby in one way or the other--and the public patronage is increased--so that you have scarcely one of the old stock of Reformers left. It seems all is a grand rush for wealth, and the man who pretends to be pure, disinterested or to aim at the reform of public abuses, is laughed at or frowned down. Papineau went into the present house with two or three so called followers. He was scarcely

³⁹ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 8 September 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 7.

⁴⁰ Rumilly, Papineau, 2: 410.

⁴¹ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 75.

⁴² Ibid.

a month there when he was alone!⁴³

But even Papineau had disappointed his old disciple, despite his abiding faith in the people:

I think if he took a stand for popular rights openly, and irrespective of the result, he would call out supporters among the people which would influence the members. But he withdrew and abandoned the field. I spoke to him about universal suffrage. He turned a deaf ear to it, and now I'm beginning to suspect that the French Canadians--from the poorest to the richest--are opposed--or indisposed to it, fearing that it would throw increased power into the hands of the Emigrants.⁴⁴

O'Callaghan and Fabre were anxious that Papineau cooperate with Mackenzie as in the past, and O'Callaghan pleaded with Mackenzie to forget his old prejudices and join with Papineau to press for reforms.⁴⁵ But another ally, T.S. Brown, who was now a bookkeeper in a Montreal hardware store, and "considerably anti-Canadian," was even more intract-

⁴³ Ibid. In a subsequent letter, O'Callaghan had been even blunter: "responsible government is a mockery--a delusion under which office holders rob and plunder...without any means of controlling men sure of their appointments for four years and able to purchase a majority in the Assembly. It requires a strong public opinion composed of the sentiments of independent educated masses, to control such a power. I fear colonies will never possess such a controlling influence--at least with quadrennial Parliaments. They are the mother of Rotteness and Corruption. Two years would be the longest term which I would have them elected, and certainly I'd turn every 'Minister' or head of Department out of the house." O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 25 November 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 70.

⁴⁴ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 75.

⁴⁵ Rumilly, Papineau, 2: 411.

able.⁴⁶ He refused to meet with Papineau and O'Callaghan because "fifteen years ago I was a master in our Israel and I care not today to put myself at the foot of anybody's Gamaliel."⁴⁷

Following upon his publication of the History of New Netherland between 1846 and 1848, O'Callaghan in his new post as state archivist had rapidly churned out the four volumes of the Documentary History of the State of New York between 1849 and 1851. He had also been appointed in 1849 to edit and translate the mass of documents collected by John Romeyn Brodhead in Europe, his salary consequently raised to \$1,500 a year. The result was the publication between 1855 and 1861 of the eleven volumes of Documents Relating to the State of New York. During the same period he was also arranging the binding of one hundred and three volumes of colonial manuscripts (1638-1801), sixty-three volumes of land papers (1630-1803), forty volumes of marriage banns (1735-83), and twenty-two volumes of Sir William Johnson's Manuscripts (1738-74).⁴⁸ He had also been instrumental in bringing to the attention of other historians the great value of the Jesuit Relations in studying the early history of America.⁴⁹ By his untiring labour and keen insight,

⁴⁶ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 76. Always a heavy drinker, he later, when he was almost blind, became a temperance leader! Rumilly, 2: 556.

⁴⁷ T.S. Brown to W.L. Mackenzie, 16 August 1852, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516. Gamaliel was a Pharisee who taught St. Paul.

⁴⁸ Guy, pp. 64-65, 86; Monet, "O'Callaghan," p. 555.

⁴⁹ He did so in an address before the New York Historical Society, subsequently published in the Society's Proceedings and as a pamphlet under the title: Jesuit Relations of Discoveries and Other Occurrences in Canada and the Northern and Western States of the Union, 1632-1672: Guy, 65-66.

he was undoubtedly one of the most influential American archivists of the second half of the nineteenth century. He was elected a member of the New York Historical Society in 1845, and of the Historical Society of Connecticut in 1847.⁵⁰

It took, though, a good deal of effort. He wrote to Papineau in 1853:

I am here altogether in the past tense--translating the records of Denonville's and Frontenac's Government of Canada. How can you expect me, then, to be conversant with the affairs of the present day? An Extra Session of the Legislature! My dear Sir, I'm not within a century and a half of it. In the times in which I am absorbed they were not, happy Souls! troubled with Legislatures--knew nothing of Constitutions and the Humbug, "Responsible Government" was not yet spawned.⁵¹

He was more of an archivist than an historian, at least in the modern sense of the term. Most of his major works consisted entirely of documents, without any analysis or even narrative. There were exceptions, however, such as his History of New Netherland, which was a narrative which even included a degree of analysis.⁵²

Interestingly though, his Documentary History of New York came under attack by the anti-Catholic, nativist Know-Nothings because of its

⁵⁰ Guy, p. 45.

⁵¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 23 June 1853, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 3: 5028.

⁵² Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, History of New Netherland (New York: D. Appleton, and Philadelphia: Geo. S. Appleton, 1846). In his preface O'Callaghan stated that he had become interested in the subject because of his researches into "the amount of civil liberty" possessed by the colonists prior to the American Revolution. He defined his main objects as "truth and historical justice." See also Guy, pp. 40-42, 47.

inclusion of many Catholic documents--some even thought he was a Jesuit!⁵³ One historian later accused O'Callaghan of borrowing an incorrect translation of a Dutch document which he included in his History of New Netherland--but he did so after the doctor's death.⁵⁴ He was, though, widely respected, and he was certainly held in high esteem by the Canadian historian, François-Xavier Garneau, with whom he corresponded quite frequently, and to whom he sent copies of his publications.⁵⁵ Garneau was impressed by his work, and wrote that O'Callaghan was nobly repaying the hospitality of New York state.⁵⁶

Garneau was interested in O'Callaghan's view of the events of 1837, and drew him out on the subject during the summer of 1852. Writing that he faulted the movement because it had failed and had had "si tristes conséquences pour nous," he nonetheless saluted such leaders as Papineau and O'Callaghan who "sont restés fermes dans leur conviction & dans leurs principes; mais ceux qui comme Morin & autres intrigans de cette espèce...après que tout a été perdu, que le sang a coulé sur l'échafaud par leur faute & L'Union decreté pour noyer les Canadiens, les faire disparaître, ont accepté des offices sous ce gouvernement de haine & de vengeance contre leur race."⁵⁷

O'Callaghan replied in a long letter which maintained his view that the British had set a trap for the patriotes:

⁵³ Guy, p. 64.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 72-73. His critic was Dr. J. Franklin Janeson.

⁵⁵ F.-X. Garneau to O'Callaghan, 9 May 1849, and 6 and 21 July 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vols. 4 and 7.

⁵⁶ F.-X. Garneau to O'Callaghan, 6 July 1852, *ibid.*, vol. 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

The immediate fons et origo of the whole matter was the refusing the supplies in 1836. The government thereupon set about bringing about a collision a la Castlereagh et Irlande. They called out and armed volunteers; issued warrants a tout et a travers and when they had the people maddened by insult they called it a Rebellion. If you are to blame the Movement, blame then those who plotted and contrived it and who are to be held in History responsible for it....We, my friend were the victims--not the conspirators, and were I on my death bed I could declare before Heaven that I had no more idea of a movement or resistance when I left Montreal and went to the Richelieu River with Papineau than I have now of being Bishop of Québec.

The movement, therefore, was begun in the Castle St. Louis, and we were like straws, hurried away by the torrent and the débâcle.

I saw as clearly as I now see that the country was not prepared. But you might as well whistle to a tornado, as endeavor to contend against the deep and damnable conspiracy that was prepared and had burst forth against the rights and liberties of the people.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ O'Callaghan to F.-X. Garneau, 17 July 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 2. In this letter he also contended that: "The movement of '37, as far as I had any knowledge of it, was a movement of the government against peaceable citizens in order to hurry the latter into an indignant resistance of personal violence. When they dragged an isolated poor peasant in the early part of 1837 from the Lake of Two Mountains into Montreal Jail for assault, which they called Treason, where was the movement? When they pulled down the Vindicator office where was the movement? When they dragged Davignon and his friend, tied with ropes, from St. Johns through Chambly to Longueuil to irritate the habitants [sic], then peaceable and quiet, where was the movement? The truth is, the whole was a settled plan of Gosford Ogden & Debartzch to goad and drive individuals into a resistance to personal violence so as to make out a case with which the Ministry might be able to go down to Parliament and ask for the destruction of the Act of 1791. And lest that would not suffice, Colborne backed it up by saying in one of his despatches, months before any opposition had been offered, that Papineau was drilling troops somewhere near Three Rivers. This is as far as my memory serves me, for I have not the despatch by me. It was written somewhere in 1837 and you can probably turn to it--I recollect calling Mr. Papineau's attention to it at the time and suggesting to him the propriety of contradicting it, for I was personally knowing to the falsehood of the statement--but as is his wont and habit too often, he treated the thing with contempt for it was the most atrocious lie I ever saw in print."

Garneau was pleased with O'Callaghan's account of events, and wrote back that he too blamed the government, which wanted the Union of the Canadas and had tried to impose one previously--in 1816, 1822, and 1828.

Garneau also believed the patriotes would not have been so unprepared had they been planning a rebellion.⁵⁹

O'Callaghan's old friend Mackenzie had finally been allowed to return to Canada in 1849, and had once again settled in Toronto. In 1851 he had been elected to the Assembly for Haldimand in Canada West, and he had been introduced into the House by Wolfred Nelson.⁶⁰ He was publishing a newspaper, Mackenzie's Message, in Toronto, and was, O'Callaghan noted in a letter to Henry Chapman, "death on Hincks, who is Inspector General, and who by his adroitness has succeeded in getting some English Capitalists to build the Great [sic] Trunk R.R. in Canada, the province guaranteeing £3000 a mile for the construction. Hincks is suspected of having had his hand greased to a large amount."⁶¹ But he remained very bitter--he especially resented his old colleagues who taunted him "as a rebel of '37," and who had benefitted from their

⁵⁹ F.-X. Garneau to O'Callaghan, 21 July 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 7. In his letter Garneau expressed his view of history: "les évènements mènent les hommes au lieu d'être menés par eux, et...les faits de l'histoire s'enchaînent & se déduisent l'un de l'autre avec un ordre & une régularité qu'on déranger rarement. J'écris en suivant cette logique."

⁶⁰ W. Nelson to W.L. Mackenzie, 4 May 1851, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.

⁶¹ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 74. In a subsequent letter O'Callaghan commented: "Hincks is making hay while the sun shines. He now drives his carriage and ponies, is speculating in Railroads and Real estate, all on £800 a year." O'Callaghan to Chapman, 25 November 1853, *ibid.*, p. 69.

fluidity of principle while he had suffered exile and poverty.⁶² The French-Canadian leaders he found ungrateful--he complained especially of P.-J. Chauveau who had called him "a rebel and a traitor," but also of A.-N. Morin and Etienne Taché. George-Etienne Cartier he considered "good tempered, but none in Assembly is more corrupt & venal. I have not seen his equal."⁶³

O'Callaghan was a man who rarely revealed his bitterness--unlike Mackenzie. But in a letter to Chapman late in 1853 he vented some of his spleen. Referring to the events of 1843, he opined that "the introduction of Responsible government into Canada embittered and aggravated the feud that existed between LaFontaine and the Papineaus and Vigers worse than ever."⁶⁴ When LaFontaine resigned in protest against Metcalfe's policy on patronage, Viger stepped in and, according to O'Callaghan, "was glad to give LaFontaine this slap in the face."⁶⁵ The result was that "a regular coalition took place between these Vigers & co. and the old family Compact of U. Canada. Louis Joseph got his back pay \$18,500, and Amedée his son was appointed one of the Prothonotaries of Montreal with an income at that time of £2,000--but since reduced to £300 a year." All of this had obviously shaken him--in his 1838 biography of Papineau he had boasted about his refusal of the Speaker's salary, but Papineau had negotiated its payment before his return!

⁶² W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 1 October 1853, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 8.

⁶³ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 2 December 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 10.

⁶⁴ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 71.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Though he said little and even tried to calm Mackenzie's recriminations at the time, it is clear that he was deeply hurt:

All this time I was keeping myself warm here by dancing my feet on the side walk, listening to Mackenzie growling like a suppressed volcano. Hated by Lafontaine for having written you that letter in 1838 exposing his intended intrigues with Stanley, and forgotten or ignored by the Vigers Papineau's [sic] for whom I labored and worked you can say how faithfully. I made no complaint, however, turned my attention to my profession and endeavored to get a living from that. However slender it may be it would be an independent one, and that you know is somewhat of a consolation to sweeten the draught.⁶⁶

Honor, just as loyalty, has its cost. O'Callaghan was often too honest a man for his own advancement, and he had many enemies back in Canada. His "friends," moreover, were not going to exert themselves too hard on his behalf--unless and until they needed him.

Another old patriote, E.-R. Fabre, was upset that La Minerve and the Freeman had come out against him in his quest for re-election to the mayoralty of Montreal during the winter of 1853-54.⁶⁷ He was particularly incensed that the latter, published by Bernard Devlin and F. Dalton, and apparently representing the Irish of the city, should attack him as he believed he had always done his best for that community.⁶⁸ But, as O'Callaghan noted, "the English speaking portion of the Liberal party have no paper--none having been established since the days of the Vindicator. The Canadians, I suppose think they can get

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 31 December 1853, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 8.

⁶⁸ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 31 December 1853, *ibid.* See Beaulieu and Hamelin, p. 184.

along very well without one, now that they have every thing they ever wanted--i.e. the loaves and fishes."⁶⁹ Fabre lost the election to Wolfred Nelson. He blamed corruption for his defeat, and credited Nelson's victory to "la Canaille."⁷⁰ His son Hector was willing to admit, though, that from the first Nelson's "friends were active, working hard, leaving nothing undone to succeed, telling lies, buying influences and votes," while his father's had waited too long to canvass.⁷¹ The result, according to Hector, was "that we lost an election which could surely have been gained very easily."⁷² Thus one more old patriote for whom O'Callaghan retained a good deal of respect had been overwhelmed by LaFontaine's forces and rejected by the electorate.

⁶⁹ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-831, 1: 77.

⁷⁰ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 15 March and 20 April 1854, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vols. 8 and 9.

⁷¹ Hector Fabre to O'Callaghan, 20 March 1854, *ibid.*, vol. 8. He also claimed that government employees had been obliged to vote for Nelson, while about 200 French-Canadian votes had been bought for anywhere from \$5 to \$40. Nelson had even waived professional medical fees due to him in return for support.

⁷² *Ibid.* On a lighter note, he asked O'Callaghan how he could be in future so eloquent in Albany without beer (was there a threat of prohibition?), and confided: "Then let you abandon a land where the freedom of drinking will be no more known, for our Old Canada where you shall find good beer and good friends": *ibid.* Earlier he had told O'Callaghan that he was following Mrs. O'Callaghan's advice and drinking a glass of beer at dinner and another before bed. Hector Fabre to O'Callaghan, 22 July 1853, *ibid.*

Political tensions were still running high by the mid-1850's between the supporters of, as E.-R. Fabre called him, "Lord Lafontaine" and those of Papineau.⁷³ O'Callaghan considered LaFontaine "a great man--in his own estimation....But he is arrogant and domineering and whilst in office has proved himself as much a friend of popular rights as Dalhousie. The consequence is, he has not been able to reenter public life, and has been shelved...this second edition of the sailor on horseback."⁷⁴ Mackenzie even considered the government capable of subjecting the postal system to espionage!⁷⁵

One issue which was greatly agitating the politicians was the abolition of the seigneurial regime. Papineau could not bring himself to renounce his own privileges, despite the fact that the reformers' bill provided the seigneurs with very generous compensation for the loss of their status and their property.⁷⁶ Not surprisingly, as Hector Fabre wrote to O'Callaghan, "Le bill seigneuriel ne satisfait guère les habitants [sic]."⁷⁷ But it nonetheless became law, and Papineau was livid: he wrote to O'Callaghan to complain, and called LaFontaine a

⁷³ E.-R. Fabre to O'Callaghan, 20 April 1854, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 9.

⁷⁴ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 73-74.

⁷⁵ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 2 December 1854, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 10.

⁷⁶ See Careless, pp. 155-56 and Wade, pp. 280-81.

⁷⁷ Hector Fabre to O'Callaghan, 14 February 1855, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 10.

plebian agitator!⁷⁸

O'Callaghan was evidently not in agreement with his old leader on this issue. He wrote to Chapman:

...the abolition of the Seigniorial [sic] Tenure is agitating the district of Montreal. Young Canada is at the bottom of this movement, and it is to this party that Papineau owes his election in Girouard's old county. Yet when the Seigniorial [sic] Tenure question was expected to come before the House, he steadily and studiously absented himself the entire Session. In truth, he is in favor of the present system and opposed to any change in it, & so is Lafontaine. Mr. Papineau is getting old, and is getting to dislike public life under the new system. He is no longer Dictator. He is but a man, and the consequence is he prefers private life.⁷⁹

In fact Papineau would shortly withdraw entirely from political involvement. The old seigneur and his wife visited the O'Callaghans in Albany during the summer of 1855. There they could not but be pleased that the doctor's library was decorated with portraits of Viger and Papineau himself.⁸⁰

By the mid-1850's the Canadas were far more prosperous than they had been five years earlier, and they would be given a further boost in the summer of 1854 by the signing of a treaty allowing for reciprocal free trade with the United States.⁸¹ As a result, the cause of annex-

⁷⁸ L.-J. Papineau to O'Callaghan, 21 January 1856, *ibid.*, vol. 11.

⁷⁹ O'Callaghan to Henry Chapman, 19 September 1853, Chapman Papers, PAC, MG24-B31, 1: 74-75.

⁸⁰ Rumilly, Papineau, 2: 432.

⁸¹ Careless, p. 138.

ation was all but extinct. A bill brought before the Assembly in 1855, moreover, which would have made the Legislative Council elective, was defeated, thus at least temporarily dooming another of O'Callaghan's long cherished hopes for Canada.⁸² He was, needless to say, disappointed, as he must also have been when another old friend, John Ryan, reported that the Irish Catholics in both Canadas were in favour of the British connection.⁸³

By 1859 D'Arcy McGee was in Canada, an Irish nationalist and former admirer of American democracy who would soon advocate Confederation and the sacred tie to Britain.⁸⁴ O'Callaghan would undoubtedly have sided with the Fenians who opposed him, but the majority of the Irish, and of the people in Lower Canada, were moving in different directions, guided by astute and moderate politicians for whom principles were flexible and corruption often a way of life. O'Callaghan had been in the United States for more than twenty years by that time, but he remained interested in developments in Canada. Mackenzie wrote to him that year once again advocating annexation as "the only remedy for the state of

⁸² O'Callaghan to W.L. Mackenzie, 26 May 1855, W.L. Mackenzie Correspondence, Mackenzie-Lindsey Papers, AO, MS 516.⁸

⁸³ John Ryan to O'Callaghan, 10 August 1854, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 9.

⁸⁴ Mackenzie wrote to O'Callaghan in 1858 requesting his opinion of McGee: "Is D'Arcy McGee friendly to justice and liberty, as you used to be? Or can you give me any idea about him at all? I have seen him but twice, and feel friendly towards him so far--and the old enemies of freedom hate him cordially. What say you?--What I want to know, is he at heart a genuine liberal?" Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 2 March 1858, Byerley (A.E.) Papers, AO, MU 454. O'Callaghan must have sent Mackenzie some clippings from American papers, for he wrote back shortly after: "I'm thankful for your fyle [sic] of McGee's papers....In the whole I like McGee very much." W.L. Mackenzie Papers, PAC, MG24-B18, vol. 4.

things I see here."⁸⁵ Both O'Callaghan and Papineau shared that view, as they had shared so many ideas, and their consequences, in the past. But their old alliance, strained as it had often been, was about to come to an end. Although only in his mid-sixties, Mackenzie was not well and had retired from office. He died in August 1861, finally at peace with a world he had so often found wanting.

Thus, while some things remained much the same, others changed. While O'Callaghan had probably always been a man of some religious fervor, there seems little doubt that this aspect of his character grew stronger in later years. Thus he published in 1861 A List of Editions of the Holy Scripture and Parts Thereof Printed in America Previous to 1860. A few years earlier he had given evidence of his faith in a letter to his friend, the Catholic historian John Gilmary Shea, after the latter had announced his decision to give up his vocation to the priesthood:

I had a brother who came home from Maynooth; desponding and hopeless, who yet rallied, went to the Irish College at Paris, volunteered for the West Indies Mission to labor among the Blacks and laid down his life at St. Lucia for the honor and glory of God. He who takes up the Cross to follow Him who died on it, must be prepared to feel the burden and the heat of the day, and be ready, too, to bear it. May God direct you, my young friend, is my earnest and sincere prayer.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ W.L. Mackenzie to O'Callaghan, 25 March 1859, O'Callaghan Papers, PAC, MG24-B50, vol. 1.

⁸⁶ O'Callaghan to Shea, 19 June 1852, O'Callaghan Papers, LC, vol. 7, cited in Guy, 52.

One can sense in this letter not just the religious side of O'Callaghan, but also his compassion and sense of commitment--he was, after all, dedicated to liberty and equality, and a medical doctor who had worked hard to save immigrant lives in 1831 and 1832.

Catholicism played an increasingly important rôle in O'Callaghan's life as he grew older, and he was proud of the Church in New York which, unlike that in Lower Canada, was prospering "without the secondary aid of state crutches, in the shape of Tithes and government alms and grants."⁸⁷ He believed a system of voluntary contributions provoked people's generosity, and was confident that the American Church had grown so strong it had "now become self-protecting, and is unassailable by any political party. Twenty-five years hence, Catholics will form the majority of the population, and hence, whenever Canada becomes an integral part of the Union....I cannot...see what danger is to accrue to her religious Institutions,"⁸⁸ This argument would not, however, turn the tide in favor of annexation in Canada.

During the 1860's O'Callaghan continued his archival work, publishing in 1865-66 the four volumes of the Calendar of Historical Manuscripts in the Office of the Secretary of State. During the same years he received a visit from Papineau, and again travelled to Montreal himself.⁸⁹ At the end of the Civil War, he wrote to Amédée Papineau:

⁸⁷ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 4: 6457-62.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ O'Callaghan to Amédée Papineau, 5 June 1865, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 4: 6434.

What do your worthy Countrymen...now think of those Scamps of refugees from the South, who have been enjoying their hospitality and repaid them by causing the Reciprocity Treaty to be annulled and embittering the whole of the North against every thing bearing the name of Canadian. When I was up at Montreal the very air stunk with Secession and even T.S. Brown was fearful of opening his mouth on the street. I told them pretty plainly that the North would triumph and crush out the damnable Heresy, but I found only one man in your entire City friendly to the Union.⁹⁰

He concluded that "Canada is now taught a lesson. She had better take care lest she be called on to learn a Severe one."

O'Callaghan was ecstatic at the north's victory and the abolition of slavery. He wrote to Papineau, describing it as "that last relic of Feudal Barbarism....This truly is a great triumph of the Rights of Man, and its achievement well repays all the loss in Life and Treasure which

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 6435-36. In a letter to L.-J. Papineau, O'Callaghan commented: "I note by the papers that Messrs. Galt & Co. have been to Washington to resuscitate the Reciprocity Treaty. Canada by her course during the late Rebellion; her open & flagrant sympathy and aid to those who would disrupt this Union and render Republicanism a 'stink' in the Noses of Nations for all future time to come, has killed the Goose that laid the golden eggs. She had a glorious opportunity to make unto herself many and powerful friends in these northern states; but she preferred to play the Flunkey and you will learn by the enclosed extract from the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury...that the Reciprocity treaty is dead! Pray read it & congratulate the Secessionists of Montreal on the success they have achieved." O'Callaghan to Papineau, 7 December 1865, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 4: 6461-62.

the last four years have entailed on the country."⁹¹ He invited Papineau to visit "this Model Republic" and "this Temple of of [sic] true freedom," and "by going to Washington gain new strength for your political principles."⁹²

A few years later, in 1868, he wrote to Papineau that he wished once again to renew their friendship during his last years, "to exchange sentiments on men and events...with one to whom I have so long looked up, and at whose feet I have sat for so many years whilst doing battle for justice and human rights."⁹³ For he was "no longer young. A few years, and that is all I anticipate."⁹⁴ He admitted that he no longer understood Canadian politics, but this did not prevent his continued support of annexation, and he suggested that parish meetings be held to gain support for it and other progressive policies in Canada:

In 1836, 7, these Parish meetings made the earth to heave, and though the opponents to Reform may now be more numerous, and more powerful than then, yet I think the people are better educated now, and you have withal a crop of young men who are better read, and better acquainted with the United States, than

⁹¹ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 7 December 1865, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 4: 6456. O'Callaghan's views were uncommon among the Irish of the North, most of whom supported the Democratic Party and its relatively soft line on abolition. Many Irish, moreover, participated in attacks on blacks during the anti-draft riot of the summer of 1863 in New York City. Much of this ill feeling resulted from competition for jobs--poor blacks, for instance, had been used to break the longshoremen's strike prior to the riot: see Gibson, pp. 90, 152-56.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ O'Callaghan to L.-J. Papineau, 19 April 1868, Papineau Papers, PAC, MG24-B2, 4: 6574. He had, he wrote, also rejected spiritualism!

⁹⁴ Ibid.

were the people of our day.⁹⁵

But it was up to the people to take action:

So long as the people may make horses of themselves, so long will they find riders; and all I can perceive is that they have now riders well booted and spurred who will embrace every opportunity that Fenianism and Yankephobia [sic] afford them, to place more burthens on the animals; to create more offices; increase patronage; levy more money and spend it more profusely.⁹⁶

As, always, for O'Callaghan, the solution lay in republican institutions, and he was pleased by Papineau's recent pronouncements.

O'Callaghan, moreover, who had years earlier expressed reservations about the annexation of Texas, was pleased by the peaceful purchase of Alaska by the United States. He wondered whether Canada and the other British North American colonies might be bought from England! "All men of reflection," he noted, "would appreciate it, as it would save Canada from the hazard of invasion and this country from incalculable expense in treasure and blood and perhaps Europe from a general War."⁹⁷

In 1870 O'Callaghan was enticed by the offer of \$5,000 a year to

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 6573.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid. He had not lost any of his interest in American affairs either. He believed that President Johnson would soon be impeached by the House of Representatives "not because of any High Crimes and misdemeanors, but because his perverse and mulish obstinacy has proved an obstruction to all the measures of Congress for the reconstruction of the Southern States." Johnson, in fact, would avoid removal from office by one vote! And he accurately predicted that General Grant would be the Republican presidential candidate in the 1868 election.

return to New York City to edit the records of that municipality prior to 1850. The doctor accomplished the bulk of the task within two years, and fifteen volumes of the Proceedings of the Common Council of New Amsterdam and New York, as well as a compilation of New York Wills, were printed and ready for publication, while many other volumes were about to be sent to the printer. Late in 1872, however, the notorious Tweed Ring of corrupt Democratic politicians running the city was exposed, and it was revealed that the printer had been paid the inflated price of \$300,000 for his work. As a result, publication was discontinued, and O'Callaghan was accused of complicity in this "genteel fraud" by the Historical Magazine and several newspapers. Although innocent of the charges, he remained unpaid and his work unpublished.⁹⁸ To the end, les bureaucrats remained his enemies.

These events must certainly have been traumatic for the elderly doctor, and Francis Shaw Guy contends that they seriously undermined his health. He had recently received yet another blow, for his mentor and friend of almost forty years, Louis-Joseph Papineau, had died in September 1871 at the age of eighty-five. O'Callaghan was himself by then well into his seventies, but he remained strong until he was overcome by modern technology and knocked down by a New York street car in 1877. Rendered an invalid, the rest of his life was spent in his home on Lexington Avenue in New York City; his last year in bed. But his mind remained active, and his once combative spirit was apparently soothed by religious contemplation and the sacraments of the Catholic

⁹⁸ Guy, pp. 75-78.

Church. Nevertheless, his body broken, he died on 29 May 1880. A requiem mass was sung in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the remains were interred at Calvary Cemetery in Brooklyn on 2 June.⁹⁹ Among the pallbearers were the eminent Whig Thurlow Weed and John Gilmary Shea. The body was absolved by Cardinal McCloskey.¹⁰⁰ He was survived by his second wife--to whom he had been married for thirty-nine years. The old rebel was eighty-three when he became a part of the history he so loved. Undoubtedly there were by then few in Canada who remembered the old and very Irish patriote.

⁹⁹ James J. Walsh, "Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan," Studies, 22 (1933), 478; Guy, p. 78.

¹⁰⁰ Guy, p. 78.

CONCLUSION

Loyauté me lie

Motto of King Richard III of England

The Irish of Lower Canada during the first half of the nineteenth century were far from a monolithic community. They had brought with them from their homeland all the animosities and suspicions of a divided and conquered people. The differences among them included not only those of religion, but of social class and provincial origin. Thus Catholic distrusted Protestant, poor envied rich and Connaughtman fought Corker during the construction of the canal at Beauharnois in 1843.¹

These people then, having left behind their birthplace and many of their traditions, found themselves alone and isolated in a British colony where most of the population spoke a language alien to them. Many of the immigrants of the 1830's, moreover, arrived without any great financial resources, and found themselves the victims not only of horrible diseases during and after their arduous crossing, but also of the enmity of much of the local population. Many French Canadians blamed them for their sickness and their poverty, and, in some cases, even considered them the unwitting agents of a vile British stratagem to depopulate the province.

¹ See R.P. Léon Pouliot, "Un conflit ouvrier au Canal de Beauharnois en 1843," Bulletin de recherches historiques 62 (1956); and Michael S. Cross, ed., The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 245-57.

Under these circumstances, it is perhaps remarkable that an attempt was made at all to forge a political alliance between the Irish of the province and the French-Canadian majority--and yet at the same time probably inevitable. For the Catholic Irish shared with the French their religion, and many Irish of all faiths had a tradition of hostility to British colonialism and a commitment to its reform or abolition.

It is therefore not surprising that such a movement towards co-operation ~~was~~ made during the late 1820's, led by the Irish Protestant Jocelyn Waller, who edited the radical English language Canadian Spectator. But to succeed the alliance would obviously require a great deal of effort on both sides. This dissertation has contended that, despite its frailty, the alliance did sprout and begin to grow, achieving even greater hardiness under the vigorous leadership of Daniel Tracey and his inspired editorship of a new paper, the Vindicator.

The stress placed on the alliance, and the strength of that alliance itself, both seem to have peaked simultaneously in 1832. It was then that Tracey won the west ward election in Montreal, only to die of the same cholera which ravaged both the immigrant and local populations of the province, and tried the patience of the French-Canadian people during these years which saw countless shiploads of poor and ill Irish refugees landing on the shores of the St. Lawrence. The stress proved too strong, and the alliance never fully recovered from it.

This failure was certainly not due to any lack of effort on the part of Tracey's able successor, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan. He had been educated for some time in France, and thus had a good command of both languages spoken in Lower Canada. O'Callaghan was an intellectual and ascerbic man--passionate, even fierce, in his hatred of the British

authorities and of all oppressors, and in his love of Ireland and of liberty--but he was not perhaps a man well suited to the delicate diplomacy needed to mediate the desires of two communities which were troubled by as many differences as they enjoyed common interests. Thus the Vindicator under his editorship often became more the English voice of reform than the herald of Irish Montreal, and O'Callaghan's decision to seek election to the Legislative Assembly in 1834 in Yamaska rather than in the west ward of Montreal indicates clearly the erosion of support there for the alliance. It seems highly probable, however, that this erosion involved not so much a lack of support for reform among the Irish (Robert Nelson, after all, won the seat), but serious doubts among the patriote leaders as to whether the French-Canadian electors of that hotly contested ward would vote for an Irishman! Thus it was deemed wise to run O'Callaghan in a safe patriote seat where an Irishman was rarely seen:

Once the Assembly had passed its ninety-two Resolutions, it became increasingly clear that some fundamental confrontation was in prospect--and the ranks of the patriotes became serried as the more moderate or fearful advocates of reform gradually fell away. It is not surprising that among these were undoubtedly many Irish--it could scarcely have been otherwise. The Irish were, after all, in an alien land, distrusting of and distrusted by both English and French, working for English bosses whom they often despised but vying for jobs with French Canadians who resented their presence. Thus the majority would inevitably seek the anonymity and relative security of neutrality, if not indifference, in any violent struggle which might ensue--especially after the British concentrated their forces in Montreal and Quebec City,

where the largest concentrations of Irish were to be found. And this course of action was, moreover, strongly urged on them by the Irish clergy, who may well have feared the consequences for their people of the triumph of the French majority. Would industries, they undoubtedly worried, dependent upon British markets be depressed? Would jobs be jeopardized? Would future Irish emigrants be prevented from coming to Lower Canada?

As it was, the British authorities and their Tory allies played the game of divide et impera very effectively: just as Catholic against Protestant had worked so well in Ireland, so here the issue of rich and powerful against poor and weak was submerged, often with the unwitting connivance of the sometimes frighteningly naive or chauvinistically nationalist patriotes, in a cacophony of English against French. The plot to confuse, to mislead, and thus ultimately to dominate the people succeeded brilliantly--and, when recalcitrant reformers refused to accept the isolation of their position, the British authorities ordered the arrests of many of the patriote leaders. This drove them to a hopeless rebellion which men like Papineau and O'Callaghan seem never to have wanted but could not avoid by the fall of 1837.

The result of the failure then of the Irish-French alliance in Lower Canada is tied inextricably to that of the patriote leadership--for the latter never grasped and accepted that social and economic reform of a fundamental nature cannot be sublimated to a drive for ethnocentric national fulfillment--fundamentally one must be sacrificed to the other, and even more so in a situation of violent crisis. Unable to understand this contradiction, the patriotes were easy prey to a British government which well understood the conflicting desires in

Lower Canada of the Irish, the English and the French, or in Ireland of the Catholics and members of the various Protestant churches. The Union of 1841 only confirmed their victory, and the firm establishment in Canada of the constitutionalist tradition of government.

The failure of the alliance did not immediately signify the wholesale desertion of the Irish to the "English" side, nor to the Tory cause. This is made clear by their muddled political allegiances during the next three decades. But the downfall of the patriotes did ensure that authority would remain in Canada with the powers-that-be, and any immigrant group would be drawn eventually to the support of such a monolith so as to cement its own social position.

It was perhaps just as well that O'Callaghan never returned to Canada in search of favour or past glory--unlike so many of his old colleagues. His continuing commentary on events north of the border, as one by one former patriotes accepted place in the united Canadas, indicated that he was by then virtually all that remained of the conscience of the movement. O'Callaghan never forgot Canada--nor Ireland--but he had the wisdom to realize that you can never really go home again, and that the battles lost at St. Charles and St. Eustache were probably not retrievable in his lifetime (despite his hopes that they were, especially during the late 1840's when Papineau had only recently returned).

Yet he was tempted to return on at least three occasions, summoned to edit a liberal newspaper in Montreal or Quebec City. In the end he wisely chose to remain in the United States, but it was not an easy decision. He was still, during the 1840's and early 1850's, passionately concerned by events north of the border, although his

remoteness had given his perspective on them a quality of detachment. But Canadian politics had changed drastically since 1837, and the climate would have been unhealthy for a man who was, if anything, more radical by 1850 than he had been fifteen years earlier, although perhaps more cautious. The United States he found congenial. There the revolution had already been won. The veneer of liberty might sometimes wear thin, but--unlike Mackenzie--O'Callaghan rarely seemed to notice. Probably he chose not to see too clearly, for he was running out of places in which to seek the freedom for which he had yearned so long.

In its complexity O'Callaghan's life is both a tribute to the strength of the human spirit, and a testament to its frailty. A man of great intelligence, he yet misunderstood the intentions of the British administration in 1837--despite the lessons he should have learned so well as a child; a lover of liberty and equality (and a leader of the Irish), he allowed himself to support wholeheartedly the patriote movement although it contained elements which were more nationalist than liberal and which would gladly have expelled the Irish, including O'Callaghan, along with all other "foreigners" from what they saw as a "French" enclave: a doctor, a journalist and a politician, he spent the last thirty years of his life as an archivist; an Irishman and a Canadian, he died an American; a man of words and reform, he is best remembered as a failed revolutionary!

But he remained true, always loyal to his friends, ever committed to his principles. Perhaps he was too unyielding, yet it is refreshing in politics to find a man who would not compromise on issues of importance, who would not accept office and power in return for his acquies-

cence in oppression, who need never hide his face nor hang his head because he had betrayed someone or something. He was a man, in fact, too rare.

APPENDIX A

IRISH IMMIGRANTS TO THE PORT OF QUEBEC, 1815-1824

Year	Buchanan's Figures for All Immigrants	Haton's Estimate of Irish Immigrants	Quebec Mercury: Irish Immigrants
1815		3,300 x	25
1816	1,250	3,300 x	238
1817	6,796	4,186	2,218
1818	8,400 +	4,933	4,599
1819	12,809	7,744	5,971
1820	11,239	6,743	5,580
1821	8,050 +	4,834	4,041
1822	10,468	6,292	8,374
1823	10,258	6,155	8,413
1824	6,575	3,909	5,168
Total	75,785	51,386	44,627

x - a poor guess (Adams, p. 421)

+ - both are too low; the figure for 1818 should be at least 8,541; for 1821, 9,591; (ibid.)

Source: Adams, p. 421. His source is the Committee on Emigration and the Quebec Mercury.

APPENDIX B

IRISH IMMIGRANTS TO THE PORT OF QUEBEC, 1829-1837

Year	Ireland	England & Wales	Scotland	Elsewhere	Total
1829	9,614 (60.2%)	3,565 (22.4%)	2,643 (16.6%)	123 (0.8%)	15,945
1830	18,300 (65.4)	6,799 (24.3)	2,450 (8.8)	451 (1.5)	28,000
1831	34,133 (67.9)	10,343 (20.6)	5,354 (10.7)	424 (0.8)	50,254
1832	28,204 (54.5)	17,481 (33.8)	5,500 (10.6)	561 (1.1)	51,746
1833	12,013 (55.2)	5,198 (23.9)	4,196 (19.3)	345 (1.6)	21,752
1834	19,206 (62.1)	6,799 (22.0)	4,591 (14.8)	399 (1.1)	30,935
1835	7,108 (56.7)	3,047 (24.3)	2,127 (17.0)	245 (2.0)	12,527
1836	12,596 (45.4)	12,188 (44.0)	2,224 (8.0)	720 (2.6)	27,728
1837	14,538 (66.4)	5,580 (25.5)	1,509 (6.9)	274 (1.3)	21,901
Total	155,712 (59.7)	71,000 (27.2)	30,194 (11.7)	3,482 (1.3)	260,788

Source: Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 40: 392-3: Copy of the Annual Report from the Agent of Emigration in Canada for 1837. Adams, p. 415, argues that 10 percent should be added to Buchanan's figures for Irish immigrants to account for illegal entries and fractions of the Liverpool emigration, which would bring the Irish total between 1829 and 1837 to 171,283.

APPENDIX C

PROVINCE OF ORIGIN OF IRISH EMIGRANTS TO THE PORT OF QUÉBEC, 1831-1837

Year	Ulster	Leinster	Munster	Connaught	Total
1831	21,791 (37.5%)	8,545 (25.0%)	7,034 (20.6%)	5,765 (16.9%)	34,135*
1832	11,492 (40.8)	7,768 (27.5)	5,029 (17.8)	3,915 (13.9)	28,204
1833	5,326 (44.3)	3,977 (33.1)	1,863 (15.5)	847 (7.1)	12,013
1834	5,822 (30.3)	6,180 (32.2)	4,792 (24.9)	2,414 (12.6)	19,208*
1835	2,928 (41.2)	1,177 (26.9)	1,916 (26.9)	1,087 (15.3)	7,108
1836	2,968 (23.6)	2,664 (21.1)	4,906 (38.9)	2,058 (16.3)	12,596
1837	3,818 (26.3)	2,715 (13.7)	5,591 (38.5)	2,414 (16.6)	14,538
Total	45,145 (35.3)	33,026 (25.8)	31,131 (24.4)	18,500 (14.5)	127,802

* These minor discrepancies with figures in Table II are from the original source.

Source: Sessional Papers, 1837-38, 40: 392-3: Copy of the Annual Report from the Agent of Emigration in Canada for 1837.

APPENDIX D

PLACE OF SETTLEMENT OF EMIGRANTS ARRIVING AT THE PORTS OF QUEBEC AND MONTREAL

	1832	1834	1836	1837	1841
Lower Canada	10,200 (19.7%)	4,090	9,600 (34.6%)	4,000 (18.3%)	6,400 (22.8%)
Quebec City & district	4,500	1,500	1,000	400	2,000
Three Rivers district	450	350	200	300	400
St. Francis district		640			
& Eastern Townships	750		6,000	1,500	
Montreal City & district	4,000	1,200	1,500	1,000	4,000
Ottawa district	500	400	900	800	
Upper Canada	35,000 (67.6)	22,210	13,000 (46.9)	16,300 (74.4)	18,022 (64.2)
United States	3,346 (6.5)	3,485	4,973 (17.9)	1,509 (6.9)	3,500 (12.5)
Died	2,350 (4.5)	800	88 (0.3)	92 (0.4)	
Returned to the U.K., New Brunswick, P.E.I., etc.	850 (1.6)	350	67 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	150 (0.5)
Total	51,746	35,025	27,728	21,901	28,072

Source: Sessional Papers: "Copies of the Annual Reports from the Agent of Emigration in Canada": 1833, 11; 1837, 42: 2; and 1837-38, 40: 394; 1842, 31:14.

APPENDIX E

NATIONAL ORIGINS OF THE POPULATION OF LOWER CANADA IN 1844

County	Population	French Canadians	English Canadians	Irish	English	Americans	Scottish	Other/ Not given
Beauharnois	29,064	12,364	8,178	4,007	476	739	2,880	420
Bellechasse	14,601	14,330	83	123	11	-	1	51
Berthier	27,121	26,035	444	152	12	50	8	420
Bonaventure	8,372	4,459	2,613	459	72	77	474	218
Chambly	17,154	15,564	663	475	215	52	117	68
Champlain	10,509	10,126	153	62	23	5	22	118
Deux-Montagnes	27,132	18,118	4,686	2,046	554	173	1,294	261
Dorchester	35,137	31,480	1,379	1,667	137	8	52	414
Drummond	9,589	5,739	2,046	960	254	185	191	214
Gaspé	7,342	4,698	2,025	211	244	8	38	118
Huntingdon	36,433	31,556	2,707	943	701	207	291	28
Islet	17,048	16,937	43	21	10	1	30	6
Kamouraska	17,564	17,439	34	21	7	-	1	62
Leinster	25,583	23,472	970	833	114	31	77	86
Lotbinière	13,764	10,781	1,447	1,315	94	9	37	81
Megantic	6,753	2,565	1,764	1,426	344	56	488	110
Missisquoi	10,933	1,498	6,287	523	301	2,131	111	82
Montmorency	8,434	8,231	69	117	5	3	5	4
Montréal	64,897	33,903	10,682	12,293	3,532	791	3,155	541
Nicolet	16,491	16,140	175	102	25	17	29	3
Ottawa	12,516	3,353	4,702	3,158	234	280	684	105
Portneuf	16,440	13,559	1,169	975	90	11	104	532
Québec	45,761	27,698	7,734	7,267	1,598	122	981	361

APPENDIX E (Continued)
NATIONAL ORIGINS OF THE POPULATION OF LOWER CANADA IN 1844

County	Population	French Canadians	English Canadians	Irish	English	Americans	Scottish	Other/ Not given
Richelieu	21,255	19,999	368	329	99	13	67	380
Rimouski	17,796	17,326	173	67	70	2	105	53
Rouville	23,192	18,377	2,980	801	136	414	169	315
Saguenay	13,787	13,424	235	18	19	4	10	77
Shefford	10,147	2,889	4,624	805	353	1,028	401	47
Sherbrooke	13,579	1,295	6,637	1,235	1,436	1,975	922	79
Stanstead	12,015	636	7,366	287	257	3,288	124	57
St. Hyacinthe	21,976	21,459	121	74	63	146	8	105
St. Maurice	21,043	20,062	393	178	61	27	46	276
Terrebonne	20,736	18,903	850	634	108	21	215	5
Vaudreuil	17,308	14,425	1,763	349	233	45	254	239
Verchères	13,260	13,293	29	13	4	6	2	3
Yamaska	12,352	12,201	68	36	3	21	-	23
	697,084	524,244 (75.2%)	85,660 (12.3%)	43,982 (6.3%)	11,895 (1.7%)	11,946 (1.7%)	13,393 (1.9%)	5,964 (0.9%)

Source: Census: 1844, p. 148. The Irish, English, Scottish, and American figures refer only to those born in those countries, not their descendants.

APPENDIX F

NATIONALITY OF ADVERTISERS IN THE VINDICATOR, 1829-1837

Year	French	English/ Scottish	Irish	Indeterminate	Total
1829	39 (17.6%)	99 (44.8%)	44 (19.9%)	39 (17.6%)	221
1830	43 (34.7)	49 (39.5)	20 (16.1)	12 (9.7)	124
1831	61 (33.2)	82 (44.6)	32 (17.4)	9 (4.9)	184
1832	80 (44)	63 (34.6)	27 (14.8)	12 (6.6)	182
1833	168 (44.1)	146 (38.3)	32 (8.4)	35 (9.2)	381
1834	200 (45.7)	185 (42.2)	33 (7.5)	20 (4.6)	438
1835	217 (51.8)	137 (32.7)	37 (8.8)	28 (6.7)	419
1836	171 (46.8)	155 (42.5)	22 (6)	17 (4.7)	365
1837	177 (57.8)	97 (31.7)	19 (6.2)	13 (4.2)	306
Total	1,156 (44.1)	1,013 (38.7)	266 (10.2)	185 (7.1)	2,620

Source: These figures were compiled from the first issue of the Vindicator of January, April, July and October for each year. 7 January 1831 was substituted for 4 January, which was missing. 2 November 1832 was substituted for the October issue, since the paper temporarily ceased publication after Tracey's death. Multiple advertisers (two or more names per advertisement) were counted individually, as were repeat advertisers (more than one advertisement per issue).

APPENDIX G

ETHNIC ORIGIN OF VOTERS IN THE WEST WARD OF MONTREAL BY-ELECTION OF 1832

Ethnic Origin	Voted for		Total
	<u>Bagg</u>	<u>Tracey</u>	
French Canadians	93 (15.7%)	500 (84.3%)	593
Irish	60 (28.6)	150 (71.4)	210
Americans	106 (90.6)	11 (9.4)	117
English and others	428 (93.5)	30 (6.5)	458
Total	687 (49.9)	691 (50.1)	1,378*

* Of the total number of voters, 43 percent were French Canadians, 15.2 percent were Irish, 8.5 percent were Americans and 33.2 percent were English or of some other ethnic origin.

Source: Jacques Viger, Statistique de l'élection, Archives du Séminaire de Québec, fonds Viger-Verreault, no. 124, p. 31, cited Galarneau, p. 52.

APPENDIX H

PROFESSIONS OF VOTERS IN THE WEST WARD OF MONTREAL BY-ELECTION OF 1832

Profession	Voted for	
	Bagg	Tracey
Merchants	105	26
Small businessmen	118	122
Artisans	200	239
Farmers	5	17
Carters	10	35
Functionaries (bureaucrats, military)	18	6
Day labourers	7	36
Professionals	35	28
<u>"Bourgeois"</u>	76	79
Others	113	103
TOTAL	687	691

Source: Viger in Galarneau, pp 55-59.

APPENDIX I

VOTES BY DISTRICT IN THE WEST WARD OF MONTREAL BY-ELECTION OF 1832

District	Voted for Bagg	Voted for Tracey
Western part of the city	242 (66.3%)	121 (33.7%)
Western part of St. Laurent suburb	188 (47)	212 (53)
St. Antoine suburb	72 (40.2)	112 (60.8)
St. Joseph suburb	73 (25.8)	209 (74.1)
Ste. Anne suburb	103 (76.8)	31 (23.1)
Pointe-à-Callière	9 (60)	6 (40)
TOTAL	687	691

Source: Viger in Galarneau, p 77.

APPENDIX J

NATIONALITIES OF THOSE WHO PLAYED A PROMINENT ROLE AT SOME OF THE
PATRIOTE MEETINGS OF 1836 AND 1837

Date of Report	County	French Canadians	Irish	Others
<u>1836</u>				
June 14	Terrebonne	25	1	2
July 9	Yamaska	30	0	2
July 19	L'Acadie*	30	2	0
July 26	Missisquoi	0	4	8
<u>Total</u>		85	7	12
<u>1837</u>				
May 25	Montreal	22	2	2
May 26	Verchères	20	0	0
June 6	Deux-Montagnes	40	6	3
June 4	Quebec City	20	2	4
June 13	Chambly	15	0	3
June 16	Terrebonne	30	2	2
June 20	Yamaska	45	2	3
June 23	Berthier	14	0	2
June 29	Montreal	13	3	4
July 4	L'Islet & Bellechasse	24	0	0
July 18	L'Acadie*	30	6	4
July 25	Boucherville*	80	1	2
August 1	Saguenay	3	0	0
August 4	L'Assomption & Lachenaie*	27	0	0
August 8	St. Maurice	50	0	0
August 11	Richelieu	23	0	1
August 15	Vaudreuil	16	0	1
August 25	Stanstead	0	1	10
September 29	Vaudreuil	13	0	3
October 23,27	St. Charles	58	1	1
<u>TOTAL</u>		543	24	46

* These are not the names of counties in the 1844 census. Boucherville and St. Charles are towns. The latter meeting was attended by delegates from many counties in the Richelieu Valley.

Source: Vindicator, 14 June, 9,19,26 July 1836; 26 May, 6,13,16,20,23,30 June, 4,18,25 July, 1,4,8,11,15,25 August, 29 September, 23,27 October 1837; Durham Papers, pp 259-67; Sessional Papers, 1837-38, vol. 39, pp 336-41.

APPENDIX K

OCCUPATIONS OF SOME PATRIOTES, COMPILED FROM THE LIST OF THOSE
TRIED FOR COMPLICITY IN THE UPRISING:

Farmers	66
Notaries	6
Doctors	2
Merchants	5
Inn-keepers	3
Blacksmiths	5
Others	17
Unknown	4

Source: Fauteux, pp. 76-80. Of these 108 rebels, two were English; one was American; the rest were Canadiens.

APPENDIX L

OCCUPATIONS OF SOME PATRIOTES, COMPILED
FROM THE BIOGRAPHIES OF AEGIDIUS FAUTEUX:

Farmers	127
Day Labourers	9
Seigneurs	1
Doctors	30
Notaries	28
Lawyers	17
Teachers	4
Journalists	4
Bankers	2
Merchants	59
Inn-keepers	15
Blacksmiths	8
Artists	8
Masons	3
Law Students	7
Priests	2
Others	46
Total	356

Source: Fauteux, part II.

APPENDIX M

OCCUPATIONS OF SOME PATRIOTES IN THE REGION OF MONTREAL,
COMPILED BY FERNAND OUELLET:

Notaries	76
Lawyers	43
Doctors	67
Surveyors	4
Merchants	258
Inn-keepers	130

Source: Fernand Ouellet, "Les Insurrections," p. 407. No figures for farmers are given, although he mentions 721 rural leaders: p. 399.

APPENDIX N

NATIONALITIES OF 2,081 KNOWN PATRIOTES

County, etc.	Total	Eng./ Scot	Irish	Amer.	Other	Total Non- French	French
Montreal-city	182	21	9	2	8	40	142
Montreal-rural	21	1	0	0	1	2	19
Beauharnois	137	5	4	1	4	14	123
Chambly	169	7	1	0	5	13	156
L'Acadie	244	7	3	0	1	11	233
Laprairie	278	10	7	0	3	20	258
Mississquoi	4	4	0	0	0	4	0
Richelieu	126	3	0	0	1	4	122
Rouville	75	5	6	0	1	12	63
St-Hyacinthe	86	3	0	0	1	4	82
Stanstead	21	14	2	1	3	20	1
Verchère	72	0	0	0	1	1	71
William-Henry (Sorel)	4	0	1	0	0	1	3
Berthier	3	0	0	0	1	1	2
Deux-Montagnes	202	13	4	0	5	22	180
Lachenaye	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Terrebonne	65	2	1	0	0	3	62
Vaudreuil	17	4	0	0	3	7	10
Trois-Rivières	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
St. Maurice	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Drummond	2	0	0	0	0	0	2

APPENDIX N (Continued)
NATIONALITIES OF 2,081 KNOWN PATRIOTES

County, etc.	Total	Eng. / Scot	Irish	Amer.	Other	Total Non-French	French
Nicolet	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Yamaska	18	2	0	0	0	2	16
Quebec City	35	3	4	0	1	8	27
Portneuf	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Beauce	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Bellechasse	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kanamaska	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
L'Islet	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Megantic	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Rimouski	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Sherbrooke	9	8	0	1	0	9	0
United States	20	0	0	20	0	20	0
Residence unknown	272	12	7	1	10	30	242
Totals	2081	125	49	26	50	250	1831

Source: Bernard, pp. 290-315.

APPENDIX O
OCCUPATIONS OF NON-FRENCH PATRIOTES

Occupation	Montreal	Quebec City	Elsewhere in Lower Canada	Origin Unknown	United States	Total
<u>Business</u>						
Merchants	4	0	7	0	0	11
Shopkeeping tradesmen (commerçants)	6	0	12	2	0	20
Innkeepers	1	1	2	1	0	5
Contractors	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hardware dealers	1	0	0	0	0	7
Clerks	3	1	3	0	0	7
TOTAL	16	2	24	3	0	45
<u>Artisan</u>						
Printers	4	0	2	0	2	8
Coopers	0	0	0	1	1	2
Cabinetmakers	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tailors	2	1	2	0	0	5
Confectioners	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sculpters	0	0	1	0	0	1
Butchers	1	0	0	0	0	1
Shoemakers	1	0	0	0	0	1
Masons	0	0	1	0	0	1
Tanners	1	0	1	0	0	2
Grocers	1	0	0	0	0	1
Joiners	0	0	5	0	0	5
Blacksmiths	0	0	3	0	0	3
Carpenters	0	0	3	0	0	3
Hatters	0	0	1	0	0	1
Saddlers	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bakers	0	0	0	1	0	1
Mechanics	0	0	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	10	2	19	3	5	39

APPENDIX O (Continued)

OCCUPATIONS OF NON-FRENCH PATRIOTES

Occupation	Montreal	Quebec City	Elsewhere in Lower Canada	Origin Unknown	United States	Total
<u>Professional</u>						
Lawyers	2	2	1	0	2	7
Doctors	2	0	11	0	0	13
Notaries	0	0	6	0	0	6
Journalists	1	0	0	0	0	1
Interpreters	1	0	0	0	0	1
Teachers	0	0	5	1	0	6
Students	1	0	1	0	0	2
TOTAL	7	2	24	1	2	36
<u>Governmental</u>						
Military officers	0	0	0	1	3	4
Customs officers	0	0	2	0	0	2
Bailiffs	1	0	1	0	0	2
TOTAL	1	0	3	1	3	8
<u>Agricultural</u>						
Farmers	1	0	32	1	4	38
Day Labourers	0	0	11	0	2	13
Woodsmen	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	1	0	44	1	6	52
<u>Other</u>						
Carters	0	0	0	1	1	2
"Encanteurs"	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	1	0	0	1	1	3
<u>TOTAL</u>	36	6	114	10	17	183

Source: Bernard, pp. 290-315.

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